



## news

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### Improving Communication Between Doctors and Pharmacists

*Fall issue of Perspectives, AHIMA's online research journal, also features studies on health information exchanges*

CHICAGO – Oct. 15, 2015 – The question of how to balance the needs of patient care with operational efficiency in the physician's office and pharmacy is one that has vexed doctors, pharmacists and patients alike.

The fall issue of [Perspectives in Health Information Management](#), the online research journal of the [American Health Information Management Association](#) (AHIMA), features a study, "[Enhancing Practice Efficiency and Patient Care by Sharing Electronic Health Records](#)," on a pilot program that involved shared electronic health record (EHR) access between clinicians and pharmacists.

"*Perspectives* strives to identify creative and compelling examples of how innovations in health information management and health IT can lead to better collaboration in healthcare and improved patient care and satisfaction," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. "This study is just one example that is highlighted in the latest issue."

The pilot program originated after a pharmacist at a supermarket chain pharmacy noticed that many patients who received care at a local physician's office had limited health literacy, chronic conditions and a long list of medicines. In the beginning, the doctor's office securely faxed medication lists to the pharmacy for each patient being seen. But the pharmacists realized they could better reinforce the treatment plan and answer more questions without calls to the doctor's office if they could access physician notes and laboratory data. After speaking with clinic management and the physicians, several of the pharmacists were allowed to read and eventually document in the physicians' EHR system.

According to the authors, benefits of shared EHR access included that pharmacists were able to more readily collect data related to patients' medical conditions and prescribed medications, lab

data and treatment plans. Communication between the pharmacists and providers was significantly enhanced and the pharmacists and providers were able to enhance their professional relationship, leading to increased trust between healthcare professionals.

The authors write strategies for success as pharmacies move toward EHR use include maintaining open communication with collaborators; determining goals of the new practice model; establishing appropriate HIT access; providing EHR training; and integrating the EHR and medication dispensing system.

The authors conclude that “this real-world example of collaboration through HIT may help to justify further research into similar areas for improvement of patient care. Sharing EHR access is one way that collaboration can benefit patients while simultaneously improve workflow efficiencies for both the physician and the pharmacy. Physicians and pharmacists may find it valuable to explore collaboration opportunities to enhance patient care and improve workflow.”

This fall issue also features the following articles:

- The article, “[Health Information Exchange Readiness for Demonstrating Return on Investment and Quality of Care](#),” details the results of a survey focused on the extent to which community health information exchanges (HIEs) deliver and measure return on investment (ROI) and improvements in the quality of care. The survey found that two-thirds of respondents agreed that community HIEs demonstrated a positive ROI.
- The case study, “[Physicians' and Nurses' Opinions about the Impact of a Computerized Provider Order Entry System on Their Workflow](#),” found that physicians and nurses had similar opinions about the ways Computerized Provider Order Entry Systems (CPOE) improved patient safety and quality of care. But a significant difference was that “nurses were more positive about its impact on interorganizational workflow and the working relationship with physicians and nurses.”
- The findings in the article, “[Consumer Opinions of Health Information Exchange, e-Prescribing, and Personal Health Records](#),” highlight “the importance of appreciating generational, behavioral, and demographic differences among patient users to both increase understanding of HIT and assess expectations among consumers.”
- The study, “[Clinicians' Knowledge and Perception of Telemedicine Technology](#),” looks at how this is perceived in a northern province of Iran.
- Nurses are the largest segment of the healthcare workforce in the acute setting. The article, “[Adoption and Barriers to Adoption of Electronic Health Records by Nurses in Three Government Hospitals in Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia](#),” looks at how nurses view EHRs and also offers recommendations to improve EHR use in Saudi Arabia.

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### **About Perspectives**

[Perspectives in Health Information Management](#) is a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal, referred to by professors, professionals, public officials, industry leaders, and policy-makers. Since 2004, it has been one of the most credible and respected journals of the HIM industry and is referenced in notable indices such as PubMed Central (PMC), the Cumulative Index to Nursing

and Allied Health (CINAHL), and Google Scholar. [Learn more](#) about the submission guidelines and the manuscript review process.

### **About AHIMA**

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 101,000 health information professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for high quality research, best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA's enduring goal is quality healthcare through quality information. [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org)