



news

233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60601

phone >>(312) 233-1100  
fax >>(312) 233-1090  
web >>www.ahima.org

**For more information, please contact:**

Lauren Kotarski

312-558-1770

lkotarski@pcipr.com

## **Transforming the Health Information Management Profession**

*AHIMA shares recommendations from its 'HIM Reimagined: Transformation Starts with You' at annual Assembly on Education/Faculty Development Institute*

**CHICAGO – July 25, 2016** – Companies and professions that are reticent or slow to change can lose their way and even become irrelevant.

To evolve and meet the challenges ahead, the [American Health Information Management Association](#) (AHIMA) introduced a draft version of [HIM Reimagined: Transformation Starts with You](#) at the Assembly on Education/Faculty Development Institute. This report is a blueprint for the way the health information management (HIM) profession and HIM education must change.

Implementing [HIM Reimagined](#) is designed to be a 10-year process with distinct phases to ensure the HIM profession is equipped for academic and professional success. *HIM Reimagined* expands on AHIMA's previous initiatives which promoted the acquisition of new skills and advanced degrees to guide HIM into the future.

AHIMA invites all stakeholders to comment on *HIM Reimagined*. A final version is expected by early 2017.

"*HIM Reimagined* is designed so that HIM professionals and students can develop the skills needed to show leadership in critical growth areas such as information governance, data analytics, project management, privacy and security and a range of payment reforms," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. "The recommendations build education strategies and pathways for career advancement. During this comment period, we look forward to additional perspectives to help inform the final document."

A team of leading educators and practitioners developed *HIM Reimagined* under the auspices of AHIMA's Council for Excellence in Education (CEE). The CEE is a group of elected AHIMA leaders including educators, practitioners and industry consultants guiding the HIM community through improvements in education at all levels.

The report's recommendations are driven by trends in healthcare that focus on preventative, predictive, participatory and personalized medicine reflect the shift to patient-driven healthcare.

"These trends played a significant role in informing the *HIM Reimagined* recommendations," said Desla Mancilla, DHA, RHIA, senior director of academic affairs at AHIMA. "Demand keeps

increasing for HIM professionals to analyze and apply data instead of simply collecting and processing it. *HIM Reimagined* empowers HIM professionals to more effectively advocate for patients and recommends ways to increase HIM faculty and build a more dynamic HIM curriculum to better prepare students for employment.”

*HIM Reimagined* makes four core recommendations:

- Increase the number of AHIMA members who hold relevant graduate degrees, e.g. HIM, Health Informatics, MBA, MD, or M.Ed, to 20 percent of total membership within 10 years.
  - AHIMA believes this can be accomplished with more academic scholarships for members seeking higher levels of HIM education; an increased number of faculty qualified to teach HIM and related graduate education; and implementation of graduate level health informatics curriculums.
- Build a mechanism to ensure availability of research that supports health informatics and information management.
  - This includes providing annual competitive research grants to promote health information and information management practices; and offering competitive dissertation scholarships to doctoral candidates conducting research on HIM-related topics.
- Increase specialization across all levels of the HIM academic spectrum.
  - This includes revisions to support specialization with a new curriculum available no later than 2019; a broader HIM core at Baccalaureate Level; and a condensed core at Master’s-level Health Informatics and Health Information Management with specialized opportunities at a program level.
- Have the RHIA credential recognized as the standard for HIM generalist practice and the RHIT (+Specialty) as the technical level of practice.
  - Key steps include transitioning the RHIT credential to a specialty focused associate level over a multi-year, multi-phased approach; ensuring clear pathways exist between associate and baccalaureate HIM programs to encourage existing HIM professionals and new entrants to the HIM profession to earn a baccalaureate degree and an RHIA credential; and aligning the certification process with industry and education needs.

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### **About AHIMA**

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 103,000 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)