



news

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Helping Patients Access Their Health Records

*Journal of AHIMA looks at how HIM Professionals
can facilitate patient engagement*

CHICAGO – March 7, 2017 – Patients have more opportunities today than ever before to use tools such as patient portals to access their health information. But many patients struggle, first to access their personal health records, and then to make sense of the contents.

The March issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* addresses how health information management (HIM) professionals can help empower and educate patients in the article, "[Making HIPAA Work for Consumers: Teaching How and Why to Access Health Records.](#)"

"The [American Health Information Management Association](#) (AHIMA) is committed to helping connect patients to their health information, and this is an area where HIM professionals can take a strong leadership role," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA.

One common area of confusion for many patients is understanding their rights and protections under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This year, the AHIMA Privacy and Security Practice Council will work on a form to accompany the legally required HIPAA document. The goal of the AHIMA form is to explain HIPAA in language that patients can more easily relate to.

The article includes other misconceptions that patients may have about the release of information and addresses ways to overcome barriers to patient engagement. One example is how some hospitals connect with patients after admission and encourage them to use this opportunity to sign up for a patient portal so they can access details of their care in one place.

Also in this issue:

The article, "[Becoming A Data Master](#)," highlights the strategic importance for HIM professionals to continue to develop their data analytics skills. Some suggestions in the article for getting started with this include:

- Review the curriculum for the CHDA credential.

- Read through the ten competencies outlined in AHIMA's Information Governance Adoption Model™ to see what areas are of interest and what skills need to be enhanced.
- Talk with company executives to see if additional analytics training can help further the organization's goals.

Read these articles and more in the March issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* or online at journal.ahima.org.

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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

