



news

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“A Blueprint for Transforming the HIM Profession”

AHIMA releases white paper HIM Reimagined: Transformation Starts with You

CHICAGO – May 18, 2017 – The health information management (HIM) profession has changed dramatically since Grace Whiting Myers founded the [American Health Information Management Association](#) (AHIMA) in 1928. And the pace of change will only continue to increase as technology becomes even more ubiquitous.

To help HIM professionals thrive in a fast-evolving healthcare landscape, AHIMA is pleased to announce the publication of the white paper [HIM Reimagined: Transformation Starts with You](#). The white paper outlines new and expanded skills and specializations that are anticipated to be in demand as data in healthcare continues to multiply and patients take greater ownership of their own health information.

“This is a blueprint for transforming the HIM profession,” said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. “*HIM Reimagined* outlines the way HIM professionals and HIM education must evolve and transform over the next decade to meet future challenges and develop the new and expanded skills that will be most in demand. There are enormous opportunities ahead for HIM professionals in emerging areas such as information governance (IG), data analytics, informatics, patient advocacy, entrepreneurship, project management, privacy and security, a range of payment reforms and more. These opportunities will give HIM professionals increased chances, to not just collect and process data, but analyze and apply it.”

The implementation of *HIM Reimagined* is designed to be a 10-year phased process. This white paper expands on AHIMA’s previous initiatives which promoted the acquisition of new skills and advanced degrees to guide HIM into the future.

“This is an exciting and consequential time for our profession,” Thomas Gordon said. “As patients increasingly take greater involvement in their own care, it is incumbent on us to continue to make sure that health information is always available when and where it is needed.”

HIM Reimagined was developed by a team of leading educators and practitioners 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 team spent their time

assessing and projecting the future landscape of the healthcare industry and higher education systems.

"HIM Reimagined provides a framework for how HIM curriculum can be revised to support emerging specialties as indicated by employer needs, align HIM accredited academic specialties with future HIM-related credentials, encourage more HIM professionals to pursue graduate degrees and increase the number of faculty qualified to teach related graduate education" said Desla Mancilla, DHA, RHIA, Vice President of Academic Affairs & Certification at AHIMA. "Instead of learning skills that may be performed by computers, an enhanced HIM curricula can be focused on teaching HIM students the skills that will be most in demand."

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

HIM Reimagined makes four core recommendations:

- Increase the number of AHIMA members who hold relevant graduate degrees, (e.g. HIM, Health Informatics, MBA, MD, M.Ed, MPH) to 20 percent of total membership within 10 years.
 - This will be driven by increased funding of academic scholarships, increased number of faculty qualified to teach HIM and related graduate education and implementing graduate-level health informatics curriculum competencies to improve the value of and increase demand of health informatics graduate education.
- In collaboration with other health and health-related organizations, in the public and private sectors, build a mechanism to ensure availability of research that supports health informatics and information management.
 - This includes providing competitive research grants aimed at promoting health informatics and information management practice, providing dissertation scholarships in doctoral programs and focusing on research to support the value of HIM skills and the need for data analytics to manage data for strategic, fiscal and population health purposes.
- Increase the opportunities for specialization across all levels of the HIM academic spectrum through curricula revision, while retaining a broad foundation in health information management and analytics.
 - This will be driven by curriculum revisions to support specialization at the associate level.
- RHIA credential is recognized as the standard for HIM generalist practice and the RHIT (+Specialty) as the technical level of practice.
 - This will be facilitated by transitioning the RHIT credential to a specialty focused associate level over a multi-year, multi-phased approach.
 - Ensure 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.
 - Align certification processes 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