

AHIMA[®]



2024

Advocacy Impact Report

Every year, the American Health Information Management Association® (AHIMA®) Policy and Government Affairs team works to advance the AHIMA vision of transforming health and healthcare by connecting people, systems, and ideas. Despite the continued challenges facing healthcare in 2024, AHIMA advocacy efforts created meaningful legislative and regulatory changes for the health information (HI) profession and the patients we serve. Learn more about the accomplishments below.

#AHIMAadvocates

Strengthening Grassroots Engagement

Grassroots engagement by AHIMA members is critical to advancing the AHIMA Advocacy Agenda. Using our [grassroots points system](#), more than 26,000 weighted grassroots actions were completed, by members participating in policy work groups, engaging with our advocacy training modules and webinars, attending the AHIMA Advocacy Summit, meeting with congressional offices, and sending letters to members of Congress.

The AHIMA Policy & Government Affairs team also hosted a webinar, the [“Post-Election Update: What Does it Mean for Healthcare in 2025?”](#) to keep members informed of the policy landscape to inform our advocacy strategy in 2025.

AHIMA Advocacy Summit

In March 2024, the annual AHIMA Advocacy Summit was held in Washington, DC. Over the two-day Summit, attendees heard from federal policymakers and experts about ongoing public policy efforts that impact the HI profession. AHIMA members also met with members of Congress to advocate on issues that impact the profession, including the AHIMA-led [MATCH IT Act](#) and the workforce implications of artificial intelligence. More than 150 AHIMA members representing 44 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico, held 178 meetings with members of Congress and congressional staff during the Summit. AHIMA’s visits helped influence 12 members of Congress to cosponsor the MATCH IT Act this year.

AHIMA/IFHIMA Global Virtual Policy Summit

In November 2024, AHIMA hosted the inaugural [Global Virtual Policy Summit](#) in collaboration with IFHIMA. The event featured conversations with HI professionals from three continents on the impact and potential policy solutions related to workforce challenges and AI. Several governmental and non-governmental organizations participated, including the [Global Digital Health Partnership \(GDHP\)](#), [USAID](#), and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Over 400 people joined AHIMA and IFHIMA from around the world to view the event live with more than 700 total people participating both live and via recording.



AHIMA as a Policy Thought Leader

In 2024, AHIMA engaged as a thought leader in healthcare with the US Congress and Biden-Harris Administration to advance our priorities. This included outreach to key leaders in Congress, as well as leadership at the Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy (formerly known as the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Office of Healthcare Experience and Interoperability (OHEI), the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the CMS Office of Minority Health (OMH), the National Committee on Vital Health Statistics (NCVHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), International Trade Administration (ITA), US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

In addition, the AHIMA Policy & Government Affairs team and advocacy work was quoted or referenced in a variety of trade and policy publications and podcasts this year on topics including patient matching, cybersecurity, the *Chevron* doctrine, interoperability, and artificial intelligence. Such publications and podcasts included: Politico Pro Health Care newsletter, [HTD Health](#), [Politico Pulse](#), [Healthcare Innovation](#), [The HIPAA Journal](#), [HealthLeaders](#), [the Philadelphia Inquirer](#), and [the MRO Exchange](#).

AHIMA embraced three key areas in its policy work in 2024: (1) improving the individual's health journey through access to information, privacy, and equity, (2) ensuring the quality, integrity, and usability of health information, and (3) advancing healthcare transformation.

Improving the Patient Journey through Access to Information, Privacy, and Equity

Protecting Patient Privacy

- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) on the HHS OCR/SAMHSA Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder Patient Records Final Rule.
- ✔ AHIMA President/Board Chair Mona Calhoun presented to the National Committee on Vital Health Statistics (NCVHS) to discuss privacy and consent in health information management.
- ✔ Led a [letter](#) recommending that HHS and its federal partners use their regulatory authorities to mitigate the impact of cybersecurity attacks in the future, through increased resiliency, transparency, and after-incident support.
- ✔ Participated in the Sequoia Project's Interoperability Matters working group on Privacy and Consent.
- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) on the CMS Updates to State Operations Manual Patient Informed Consent Requirements for Sensitive Examinations.
- ✔ Created an [FAQ summary](#) of OCR's fact sheet on the Change Healthcare Cybersecurity Incident.
- ✔ Served as a panelist at The Sequoia Project's Annual Meeting.

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Advocating Health Equity

- ✔ Joined the [Whole Child Health Alliance](#).
- ✔ Endorsed and promoted an email campaign for [S 1769 / HR 3805](#), the Kickstarting Innovative Demonstrations Support (KIDS) Health Act of 2023 which resulted in more than 430 letters to Congress in support of the issue. This bill would enable states to improve health information technology systems to better facilitate data sharing, early intervention, and care coordination across child-serving sectors.
- ✔ With the [Health IT End Users Alliance](#), [commented](#) on the ASTP Health Equity By Design proposed approach.
- ✔ Served as a panelist at the RISE/Aligning for Health SDOH Policy Forum.

Ensuring the Quality, Integrity, and Usability of Health Information

Accurate, Timely, and Complete Information

- ✔ Led a multi-organization [response](#) to a congressional CURES 2.0 request for information with nearly 40 signers in support of policies to accelerate progress of the secure exchange of electronic health information.
- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) and [submitted comments](#) to CMS on the FY 2025 Medicare Hospital IPPS proposed rule.
- ✔ Sent a [letter](#) to HHS encouraging them to designate an office to serve as a central coordinating entity for ICD-11.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to CMS on the CY 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule proposed rule.
- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) for Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to an ASTP request for comment on the Draft USCDI Version 5.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to CMS on ICD-10-PCS code proposals discussed at the March ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee meeting.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to the CDC on ICD-10-CM code proposals discussed at the March ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee meeting.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to CMS on ICD-10-PCS code proposals discussed at the September ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee meeting.
- ✔ Submitted [comments](#) to the CDC on ICD-10-CM code proposals discussed at the September ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee meeting.

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Patient Identification and Matching

- ✔ With the [Patient ID Now](#) coalition and Representatives Mike Kelly and Bill Foster, worked to introduce [HR 7379: The Patient Matching and Transparency in Certified Health IT \(MATCH IT\) Act of 2024](#) which received bipartisan support and garnered 14 cosponsors in the US House of Representatives. The MATCH IT Act would improve standards and definitions to advance patient matching within the healthcare ecosystem.
- ✔ Achieved a \$3 million increase in the [FY24 federal budget](#) for ASTP/ONC to “work with industry to develop matching standards that prioritize interoperability, patient safety, and patient privacy.”
- ✔ Succeeded in continuing the inclusion of \$3 million in the FY25 US House of Representatives’ [Labor-HHS bill](#) for ASTP/ONC to address patient matching.
- ✔ With the [Patient ID Now coalition](#), led letters to the [US House Appropriations Committee](#) and [US Senate Appropriations Committee](#) from more than 150 organizations urging the repeal of Section 510 in the FY25 Labor-HHS-Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bills.
- ✔ In conjunction with CHIME and the Patient ID Now coalition, hosted a congressional briefing: “The MATCH IT Act: Making Patients Safer One MATCH at a Time.”
- ✔ Garnered 13 US Representatives’ signatures on a Dear Colleague letter requesting Section 510 be removed from the FY24 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill.
- ✔ With the Patient ID Now coalition, [responded](#) to a congressional request for information on Cures 2.0.
- ✔ In conjunction with the Patient ID Now coalition, hosted Patient ID Week, which resulted in nearly 1,000 actions, including emails, social media posts, and members sharing their stories.
- ✔ In a year-long campaign, sent more than 1,400 emails to Representatives and nearly 400 social media posts in support of the MATCH IT Act.

Strengthening the Health Information Workforce

- ✔ AHIMA workforce/AI survey was [cited](#) by the American Hospital Association in their response to the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics Workgroup on Timely and Strategic Action to Inform ICD-11 Policy RFI.
- ✔ [Nominated](#) seven Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) codes related to the HI profession for inclusion in the US Department of Homeland Security’s Designated Degree Program List.
- ✔ Promoted an email campaign for [S 722 / HR 1477](#), the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow’s Workforce Act, which resulted in more than 1,000 letters to Congress in support of the issue. This bill would modernize 529 accounts, traditionally used to cover tuition expenses for college and graduate degrees, to include certification and credentialing costs as qualified expenses.
- ✔ Promoted an email campaign for [HR 7307 / S 4957](#), the Health Care Workforce Innovation Act of 2024, which resulted in nearly 600 letters to Congress in support of the issue. This legislation would establish a grant program focused on increasing the number of allied health professionals, including health information professionals, in the workforces of underserved communities and rural areas.

Improved Oversight of Artificial Intelligence

- ✔ Published issue brief, [“Artificial Intelligence Tools for Documentation and other Non-Clinical Work in Healthcare.”](#)
- ✔ As part of the Health IT End Users Alliance, submitted [comments](#) in response to a NIST RFI on AI.
- ✔ [Responded](#) to US Representative Ami Bera’s request for information which invited responses on the uses and impact of artificial intelligence within the healthcare ecosystem.
- ✔ Participated in an HHS working group meeting on AI.
- ✔ Hosted the AHIMA AI webinar [“Public Policy & AI.”](#)
- ✔ Published an [Artificial Intelligence Regulatory Resource Guide](#) with a timeline overview of AI regulations related to healthcare, including the Executive Order on AI released by the Biden-Harris administration and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- ✔ Participated in the Pan-Canadian Conference on Health Information discussing the US approach to regulating Artificial Intelligence.

Advancing Healthcare Transformation

Promoting Better Information Flows

Better Integrating Clinical and Administrative Data

- ✔ With the Health IT End Users Alliance, published a [collaborative roadmap](#) for the years 2024-2027 to spark discussions about regulatory requirements placed on end-users and to identify ways to lessen administrative burden by better aligning and sequencing federal deadlines.

Improving Information Sharing

- ✔ With the Health IT End Users Alliance, [commented](#) on the ASTP 2024-2030 Draft Federal Health IT Strategic Plan.
- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) on the Advancing Interoperability and Improving Prior Authorization Processes Final Rule.
- ✔ Joined more than [170 organizations](#) requesting \$500 million in funding for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).
- ✔ With the Health IT End-Users Alliance, hosted the Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy Micky Tripathi and CMS official Alex Muggge for conversation on harmonization and implementation of regulatory requirements, reducing administrative burden, and end-user involvement in policy and standards development.

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Improving Information Sharing (cont.)

- ✔ Led, with HIMSS and CHIME, a [sign on letter](#) garnering over 50 signers in support of increased funding for ASTP/ONC for FY25.
- ✔ Created a [compliance resource](#) for health information professionals working to implement the OCR HIPAA Privacy Rule to Support Reproductive Health Care Privacy final rule.
- ✔ Created a [fact sheet](#) and submitted [comments](#) to ASTP's Health Data, Technology, and Interoperability (HTI-2) proposed rule.
- ✔ Promoted an email campaign for [HR 8702](#), the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act of 2024, which resulted in nearly 500 letters to Congress in support of the issue. This bill would modernize the way Medicare Advantage plans and healthcare providers use prior authorization, including reducing administrative burden and reducing delayed care.
- ✔ With the Health IT End Users Alliance, [commented](#) on the ASTP 2024-2030 Draft Federal Health IT Strategic Plan.
- ✔ Published issue brief on "[Considerations for a Transition to Electronic Prior Authorization.](#)"

Public Health Information Needs

- ✔ Promoted an email campaign for [S 1995](#), the Public Health Infrastructure Saves Lives Act, which resulted in nearly 600 letters to Senators in support of the issue. This legislation would create a public health infrastructure program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to modernize public health at every level.

Telehealth

- ✔ Joined more than [200 organizations](#) urging congressional leaders to act on telehealth before the end of year expiration on telehealth flexibility extensions.
- ✔ Joined nearly [300 organizations](#) calling for an extension of current telehealth flexibilities in an end-of-year package.

Transforming health and healthcare will not happen overnight. However, AHIMA and its members stand committed to working with our federal policymakers to improving health and healthcare through the creation, collection, exchange, and use of trusted health data to attain the highest level of individual and community health. The AHIMA Policy & Government Affairs team thanks all of our advocates and volunteers for their continued support and commitment to AHIMA policy activities in Washington, DC.

For more information or for questions, please email advocacy@ahima.org

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