



e-Coastlines

January-February 2009

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President's Message



Dwan Thomas Flowers, MBA, RHIA, CCS

S.H.I.N.E.

*A time for **S**elf-examination, **H**umility, **I**ntegrity, **N**ovelty & **E**nthusiasm*



Happy 2009! It is so hard to believe that 2008 has come and gone. The new year is always a good time to stop and reflect on how you spent the most precious gift of time and how you can better expend that time in the future. It is truly a time for **S**elf-examination to ensure that you are true to yourself and appropriately committed to your current obligations (family, friends, loved-ones, profession, spirituality to name a few). **H**umility is a great characteristic. For some, it is inherent; for others, it should be adopted. Being humble can make the difference in how others respond to you, which really can make a difference in your successes in all aspects of life. **I**ntegrity is a given in the HIM profession. It's almost pointless to mention, considering the sensitive nature of the very fabric of our professional existence. **N**ovelty is essential during times of transition. The profession is in a constant state of transition, and there is no better time to exercise innovation. Finally, **E**nthusiasm is a necessity to keep a fresh outlook for things to come. It is indispensable to our growth, and we have to be forward-thinking and creative to thrive. I am sure that we all can apply the above concepts to all aspects of our lives. From an HIM perspective, hopefully taking time to reflect as well as to project will assist us in meeting our current needs.

As a part of 2008 HIM reflections, I would like to remind everyone that National Health Information & Technology Week (HI&T) week was held November 2nd – 8th. I hope that each of you were able to participate and will perhaps share some the ideas that you implemented to recognize HIM professionals. This is a great opportunity to market the HIM profession as well as showcase the successes your area may have had during the year. It would be wonderful if anyone would like to share some of their ideas via an eCoastlines article, showing how HIM-friendly your organization is and what your role is in ensuring that HIM is recognized for its critical work.

On December 5th, the first 2008-2009 FHIMA Regional Presidents and President Elect phone conference was held. These phone calls are scheduled bi-monthly, and I appreciate the participation. The regional leaders had the opportunity to share a few best practice items with one another. We learned about a variety of types and frequencies of meetings, discussed dues and other fundraising opportunities. I am looking forward to the next one, which is scheduled for April 17, 2009 from 3-4 pm.

FHIMA e-alerts will be returning shortly. We expect to send the blasts out each month again, beginning in January. This is a way to keep the membership informed of what's new, upcoming deadlines and important events like Hill Day and the AHIMA Regional Coding meeting, which FHIMA hosts this year. More information is forthcoming. We received positive feedback regarding this style, and we look forward to continuing with this form of communication.

Also, now is the time to think about submitting nominations for Service Awards and volunteer positions. Each year FHIMA needs a new President-Elect, Directors and a Delegate to AHIMA. Additionally, speakers are needed to ensure the success of the FHIMA Annual Convention. If you know of someone or are interested in one of these positions, please visit the "[What's New](#)" section of www.fhima.org for a nominations form or to volunteer.

I hope you each had a happy holiday season and a memorable 2008. I sincerely send my regards to each of you and your families with hopes for a bright 2009 in which you will continue to S.H.I.N.E. There are several ways that you can accomplish this. Writing an article, mentoring a student, accepting an intern, volunteering and enhancing your own HIM knowledge base are all good ways to start! Each small step towards advancing the science of HIM is appreciated.

FHIMA News

FHIMA Announces Webinar “Joint Commission IM & RC Standards for 2009”

Speaker, Patricia Brown, MS, RHIA, President, IBF Group

ARE YOU READY for the many changes with the IM standards for 2009?

Join us for an informative webinar on the changes with the Joint Commission IM standards effective in 2009. This session will examine the impact The Joint Commission “Standards Improvement Project” will have on HIM departments and professionals when this “project” goes live January 1, 2009. A special focus will be placed on the 2009 National Patient Safety Goals that affect HIM. The Joint Commission standards that pose “opportunities” for the HIM professional will also be targeted. Throughout the entire presentation, tips on how to put your best foot forward during a Joint Commission survey, will be given. In addition, some of the IM Standards that have been revised and relocated to the Record of Care, Treatment and Services Chapter will be discussed in detail.

1.5 CEUs will be offered at the completion of the webinar.

Registration is \$95 per person for registrations posted on or before 1/23/09 and \$110 after 1/23/09. To register go to www.fhima.org and click on What’s New to find the registration form link.

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Earn CEU’s for writing articles for FHIMA’s e-Coastlines!

You can earn 2 AHIMA CE units for writing articles for the state newsletter. Florida’s state newsletter is the online newsletter called e-Coastlines. In order to for the article to qualify for CE units it must be related to the HIM field and at least 3 paragraphs in length.

So get those fingers typing! FHIMA is always in need of informative articles on a variety of HIM topics. For example, we would love informative articles on ICD-10, e-HIM and best practices to name a few! We are also looking for articles from HIM professionals who work in an “HIM friendly” environment to share their experiences and efforts to get HIM recognized and supported in their organization. How have you worked with administration to promote the importance of HIM in your organization? By sharing experiences, other professionals may be able to follow your footsteps and implement ideas and strategies in their own work setting to boost the support for HIM!

To submit articles, please email them to the FHIMA e-Coastlines Chair, Becky Dicus at becky.dicus@hcahealthcare.com

Article submission deadlines are: February 15, April 15, June 15, August 15, October 15 and December 15.

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FHIMA Call for Elections!

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE...
FHIMA Needs Enthusiastic Volunteers LIKE YOU!**

Each year, we seek candidates for the following positions:

President-Elect: The position is a 3-year commitment. The president-elect is a member of the Board

and works closely with the President and Management Steering Committee. The 2nd year is the President, and the 3rd year, sits on the Board as Past President/Director.

Qualifications:

- 1) Experience serving as an FHIMA Board Member
- 2) Active Membership in AHIMA and FHIMA

Director: This is a 2-year commitment. Each year **THREE** Directors are voted on to the Board. They serve as liaisons to Committees and conduct business of the Association.

Qualifications:

- 1) Experience serving as an FHIMA Committee Chair or officer in a regional association or prior HIM leadership role in another state.
- 2) Active Membership in AHIMA and FHIMA.

Delegate to AHIMA: This is a 2-year commitment. The first year the AHIMA Delegate attends the AHIMA Annual meeting, and the second year, attends the AHIMA Meeting AND sits on the Board as Chief Delegate.

Qualifications:

- 1) FHIMA Board or Committee Chair experience.
- 2) Served as a delegate to FHIMA House of Delegates
- 3) Active Membership in AHIMA and FHIMA.

*FHIMA Board members who fulfill their term obligations will receive a complimentary FULL registration to the FHIMA Annual Convention!

[Click here](#) to obtain the 2009 Nominations Form

For more information, please contact:
Michelle Mock, MSM, RHIA
FHIMA Nominations Chair
Fax: (813) 464-8333
michelle.mock@wellcare.com

Voting will take place electronically in the Spring. Watch for emails and postcard indicating when FHIMA polls are open!

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FHIMA Service Awards

Nominate a HIM Professional who deserves recognition!

Nominations will be taken soon for the following awards:

- Distinguished Member
- Distinguished Service (FHIMA Member or Non-member)
- Literary
- Outstanding Student
- Outstanding New Professional
- Outstanding Professional
- Educator Award (NEW!)
- Mentor Award (NEW!)

We have many deserving members. Be sure to think about your colleagues and nominate them for an award.

[Click here](#) for Service Awards Criteria

[Click here](#) for Service Awards Nomination Form

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Attention HIM Program Students!

2008 FHIMA SCHOLARSHIPS INFORMATION

FHIMA is pleased to announce a continued support of individuals pursuing Health Information Management careers. FHIMA has again voted to provide scholarships this year to students enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate studies related to the Health Information Management field. In addition, FHIMA will again award the Charlotte Stockton Memorial Scholarship.

As in years past, scholarships will be awarded to FHIMA members to defray the cost of a Health Information Management related education.

FHIMA announces that it will again award the Charlotte Stockton Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship honors the memory of Charlotte Stockton (Stat Solutions, Inc. and Professional Outsourcing Solutions, Inc.) who was committed to the HIM Profession. This scholarship will be offered to qualified applicants enrolled in AHIMA approved Coding Certificate programs.

[Click here](#) for general FHIMA Scholarships Application

[Click here](#) for Charlotte Stockton Memorial Scholarship for Coding Certificate Program students

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Mark Your Calendars!

The FHIMA 2009 Annual Convention is July 13-16, 2009 at the Omni Orlando Resort ChampionsGate, Florida. Registration information will be available in early Spring. Watch the FHIMA website for details!

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Articles

Choosing the Right Coding Credential

By Stacie L. Buck, RHIA, CCS-P, LHRM, RCC
Email: sbuck@radrx.com

As the demand for qualified coders has increased, so has the number of coding programs and coding certifications available to coding professionals seeking to demonstrate their coding proficiency. The business of offering credentials is indeed a lucrative one with many organizations competing for your business; therefore it is imperative that you become an informed consumer when deciding which coding certification to pursue. Earning and maintaining a coding credential is a long term investment and one that deserves careful consideration.

Over the years I have spoken with individuals who have spent hundreds and even thousands of dollars to

participate in coding training programs and earn certifications only to find that their studies have not adequately prepared them nor do employers recognize the credential that they have earned. To avoid finding yourself in the same situation, here are some items to consider to ensure a credential meets your needs and if it is a wise investment of your time and money:

Career Goals

- Where do you want to work? Does the healthcare setting in which you want to work prefer a particular credential?
- Is there a particular specialty in which you would like to work? If so, is there a specialty credential that is preferred by employers of that specialty?
- Do you need to earn multiple credentials?
- Do you already have one or more credentials? Will the additional credential demonstrate a distinct competency or skill from the credential(s) you already possess?

Recognition

- Is the credential widely recognized by employers?
- What is the reputation of the organization offering the credential?

Qualifications

- What are the minimum qualifications to sit for the credential exam?
- Does the testing organization require you to complete their training course prior to sitting for an exam?

Costs

- What is the exam fee?
- How many continuing education credits are required to maintain the credential?
- How can continuing education credits be earned? Are credits earned only by participating in programs approved by the organization offering the credential?
- What is the estimated cost of continuing education maintenance?
- What are the benefits are offered by the organization and what are the fees?

A career in coding can be both an exciting and rewarding one, but it is one that should be carefully considered and planned to ensure your desired success in it. Best of luck to you on your coding journey!

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AHIMA Offers New Credential In Health Data Analytics

By Carla Gaines, MPH, RHIA, CCS
Chairman, Data Quality Committee

It's official. AHIMA is offering the Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA) credential as approved by the

House of Delegates in October of this year. This new credential is intended to recognize and distinguish individuals who analyze and interpret health data as a primary responsibility and is designed to validate mastery skills as opposed to minimum competency.

In October 2007, the Council on Certification (CoC) solicited preliminary member feedback by presenting the concept to the AHIMA HOD as an issue forum. Although not presented for a vote, the HOD approved the concept in theory and the CoC proceeded with a workforce study that supported the need for this new credential. A motion was presented in the 2008 HOD and an informed decision was made to offer the CHDA credential. Eligible members may now register to sit for this examination.

As the healthcare industry continues to become more data-driven, the HIM profession is in need of professionals who can effectively gather and process all kinds of health data to facilitate informed decision making for healthcare organizations, insurers, and policymakers. According to AHIMA, this prestigious certification will provide practitioners with the knowledge to acquire, manage, analyze, interpret, and transform data into accurate, consistent, and timely information.

For additional information or to register for the examination, visit www.ahima.org/certification or call (800) 335-5535.

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DOH Requests Hospitals' Assistance in Clarifying Birth Certificate Policy

The following article was submitted by the Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics:

There seems to be something of an "urban legend" roaming around in Florida hospitals. The state office receives daily inquiries from parents wanting to know where their "free" birth certificate is for their baby. They are convinced they were told they would get a free copy and "remember" getting one with their last child.

There is no automatic free copy of a birth certification. Most facilities provide a packet of information upon the mother and child's release, which may include information on how to obtain a certification from either the county or state office, but there is a fee associated with this service.

The birth registrar works with the mother in completing a birth worksheet from which the actual birth certificate is constructed, so it may be that the parents misunderstand this process and conclude that they will get a free certification. Perhaps they question if there is a fee for completing and filing the birth certificate and when told that there is no fee involved, it is misinterpreted. It's really hard to say how the misunderstanding actually originates, but we don't want parents failing to order a birth certification under the misconception they will automatically get one in the mail, free of charge.

We ask hospital birth registrars to work with the parents and explain they may obtain a certification of their child's birth certificate from any county health department or from the state office. Information on obtaining the certification from the state office can be found on our website at: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html

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Encouragement for Recent Graduates!

By Charono Vandergriff, RHIT, CPC

I want to congratulate all of you on your recent graduation of the Health Information Management Program. You have accomplished a great milestone in your life and should feel great pride and self gratification for this momentous accomplishment. I recently graduated from my HIM program and immediately set my goal to take the National RHIT exam as soon as possible. Even though, I was filled

with anxiety and fear regarding passing the exam. I began studying and in October of this year I passed my RHIT exam. The moment you find out you passed the exam is a wonderful experience. The happiness, excitement, pride, and of course the relief all coming together at once is a moment in your life you will always remember. So, don't let fear make you delay in taking your exam. Now is the time to send in your application and set the date to take your National Examination while the material is fresh on your mind. In addition to the Professional Review Guide for the RHIT Examination I used the Alfred State University website. For \$25.00, you can use the websites practice tests and take their RHIT Mock Exam. I have included the Alfred State web address for your convenience. **Good Luck to All.**

<http://www.alfredstate.edu/search/node/RHIT+Prep>

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Student Forums Are A Great Success In Northeast Florida

By Raeanna Bonetti

When I think back to when I was a student, I remember feeling very unsure about my future. I had no idea what I was going to do with my degree. Most people who choose HIM think they want to be a coder and, of course, everyone wants to work from home. I was no different. Once I took my first coding class though, I realized quickly that coding was not for me. So I began wondering, "What other options do I have?" Luckily for me I already worked in a healthcare organization and had management experience. So...I knew I had alternatives. But what about all of the students who don't work in a healthcare setting and don't have anyone to mentor them? They also need to know that they have alternatives.

Something we do here in Northeast Florida to help students make HIM career choices is to facilitate an annual student forum. The key here is **Early Planning!**

The first thing to do is determine where and when the event will be held. We contacted our local HIM program directors and found that Tuesdays and Thursdays work best. Students usually attend classes those days and the program directors could have them attend the forum instead of class. The program directors were also able to give us an idea of how many students to expect so that we were able to be better prepared with things like seating, handouts and refreshments. The other decision that we were able to make with the program directors' help was to hold the event in February. Since students graduate in May, they usually start trying to network around this time.

The next item on the agenda was to call/email local hospitals to see who had a room large enough to accommodate us. Our 2nd annual event hosted approximately 100 people.

We then called local members and asked for volunteers. People are much more likely to say yes when you ask personally. One of the volunteers was a speaker who talked about her HIM journey and motivated the students. The other volunteers set up different stations for the students to stop at. These stations included coding, management, clinical informatics, consultants, educators, transcription and privacy officers, etc. We even had a station to tell the students about how they could volunteer in the local association. The F.I.R.E committee wore black t-shirts with our new logo on them. These were a big hit! This event turned out to be a great success because of all of the volunteers involved!

This year we would like to make the event even better! We have plans to invite local high school students with interests in healthcare professions by sending flyers to the local high school guidance counselors. We would also like to have a vendor sponsor the event so that we can provide a light dinner. Most of our volunteers come straight from work and this would be a great benefit. This means that we will need an extra room for food this year.

I know this all sounds like a lot of work and when you first start putting it all together it feels like it. However, once you get a few volunteers involved, it all pulls together smoothly. When you hear the student's comments after the event, it makes it all worth it. It is amazing how quickly you can get motivated to start working on the next event to make sure it is even better!

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What's Happening in the Northeast Region! An update from NEFHIMA.

By Lynn Jacek, RHIT, President-Elect, NEFHIMA

Wow...It's so hard to believe that half the year is over and so much has happened here in our region!

Hi! My name is Lynn Jacek. I have been an RHIT since 1996, currently working as a coding specialist at The Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida since arriving 2-1/2 yrs ago. Originally from Buffalo, NY, my career in the medical field began as a candy striper, a nurse's aide, and continued on as a nurse for 20+ years. As the "new kid in town", I served last year as the co-chair for the F.I.R.E. (Find, Inspire, Recruit, and Educate) committee for NEFHIMA and am currently the President-elect of the North East Florida Health Information Management Association for 2008-2009. I was asked to write and tell you all about our Scholarship Fund efforts.

This year, we have made the Scholarship Fund and the F.I.R.E. Committee two of our top priorities.

First, by holding business meetings at the beginning of our regional meetings we have significantly increased attendance and participation at the business portion of our meetings. This change has given us the opportunity to motivate our membership to become more involved in making group decisions and voicing their opinions. We have tried to foster a more interactive meeting time while keeping it focused. We also created a fun atmosphere by just being relaxed, down to earth, and having "Super Coder Girl" show up to lighten things up.

We started a "Spare Change for Scholarships" jar and have encouraged everyone to put whatever change they have lying around the house, the car, and the office desk drawer into it at each meeting. One of our members even brought in a change counting machine so we can have an instant tally at the end of each meeting. We have been raffling off baked goods at \$1.00 per/ticket with all proceeds going to the scholarship fund. One of the members even put out a challenge to the rest of the group to match or exceed her \$50 donation to the Scholarship Fund. Our goal is to provide a minimum of three \$500 scholarships by the end of this 2008-2009 year for HIM students attending our local colleges. To date we have raised \$258 by these combined efforts.

We are also working to encourage our local students to become more actively involved in the association. We have a number of opportunities that need volunteers, such as mailings, setting up at meetings, phone calls, making posters, helping to man booths for our Spring Seminar and any other areas where they can help us while also learning what NEFHIMA is all about and networking with people already in the HIM profession. The local HIM program directors are active in our association and they encourage their students to attend meetings and seminars that we offer. Our Student Forum is quickly approaching in February. We are hoping to meet or exceed last year's attendance.

Finally, our F.I.R.E. committee has received requests for speakers to come out and talk with students at a few of the local college HIM programs, as well as, with several of the local high schools. Letters of introduction were sent to all the local high school and alternative school guidance counselors in the counties that we serve requesting the opportunity to come speak to students and/or be a part of their career fairs at the school. We have been well-received and, in one case, were even asked to come back to speak to a class in a new semester. We are looking into having t-shirts made with our F.I.R.E. Committee logo on it, and plan to sell them for a few dollars over cost so that we can provide educational materials for students when we go out to speak at the schools.

All in all, we are seeing our efforts pay off with all of these diligent efforts. Please feel free to contact myself or anyone on the Board if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

"It's time to light a fire in the heart of every future HIM professional...one student at a time".

Find! Inspire! Recruit! Educate!

NEFHIMA 2008

AHIMA Update

Upcoming Events: There are no listed events for 2009 as of yet.

AMIA White Paper Examines Open Source Software in Healthcare

The American Medical Informatics Association recently released a white paper, "Free and Open Source Software in Healthcare 1.0," examining open source software and its unique properties which can solve some challenges for health information technology. The paper explores concerns about cost, ethics, interoperability, privacy and security. The complete white paper is available [here](#).

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New Health Story Project Unveiled

Last week the project formerly known as Clinical Document Architecture for Common Document Types (CDA4CDT) announced it will now be known as the Health Story Project. The Health Story Project develops and promotes data standards that support the flow of information between narrative documents and electronic health records. The Health Story Project is a collaborative of healthcare vendors, providers, and associations that hold an Associate Charter Agreement with Health Level Seven (HL7) including M*Modal, AHIMA, the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity, and the Medical Transcription Industry Association. CDA4CDT will continue as the label for the technical standards developed by the project and submitted to Health Level Seven (HL7) for ballot. Click [here](#) to learn more.

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Study: New Doctors Feel Less Efficient Without Technology

A recent study conducted with graduates of the Vanderbilt University Medical Center shows that doctors who were trained to work in a technology-rich environment but work in less modern facilities feel less able to practice safe care. "Performing Without a Net: Transitioning Away from a Health Information Technology-rich Training Environment" is published in the December issue of *Academic Medicine*. Lead author of the study, Kevin Johnson, MD, said when new doctors "realize the systems they have are less functional and less pervasive than the systems which they are familiar, there is an entirely new set of challenges to master." The abstract of the article is available [here](#).

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Sentencing in HIPAA Violation

An Arkansas woman who was the first in her state to be prosecuted under HIPAA was sentenced to probation and community service. Andrea Smith, a 25-year-old woman from Trumann, AR, was sentenced on December 3 to two years probation and 100 hours of community service for accessing and disclosing a patient's health information for personal gain.

The incident took place in November 2006. Smith was fired upon discovery of the breach, and in December 2007 a federal indictment charged her with wrongful disclosure of individually identifiable health information for personal gain and malicious harm. Smith faced a maximum of 10 years in prison, a fine of no more than \$250,000, or both, as well as a term of supervised release of not more than three years. You can read more [here](#) at the *Journal of AHIMA* Web site.

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Give AHIMA Your Feedback, Enter to Win AMEX Gift Card

AHIMA is conducting research to improve our Web site and would appreciate your feedback on ahima.org by completing a brief online survey. This survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All responses to this survey are confidential and will only be used in the aggregate. If you take the time to complete this survey, AHIMA will show its appreciation by entering your name into a raffle to win one of five \$50 American Express gift cards. To get started, click [here](#). Thank you in advance; your feedback is very valuable to us.

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CoP News You Can Use: Locating *Journal* Articles in the BoK

Did you know that you can find complete articles from the *Journal of AHIMA* in the FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge (BoK)? Most articles published since January 1998 are available. In the BoK section of the AHIMA Community, you can find a link to the latest issue of the *Journal*. Simply click on the link to view all the articles from the issue. You can also store links to earlier issues of the *Journal* in the BoK section of your personal CoP page. When you can't access your print copy, find the information in the BoK.

Don't miss "HIM and Health IT: Discovering Common Ground in an Electronic Healthcare Environment" from the November/December 2008 issue of the *Journal*. This new practice brief was developed by AHIMA's Privacy and Security Practice Council. To access the BoK, go to www.ahima.org and log in using your AHIMA ID number and password in **myAHIMA** on the right side. Click on FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge in **myAHIMA**.

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Using ACE Members as a Professional Resource

ACE (the Action Community for e-HIM Excellence) mobilizes a network of experts and change agents to identify, prepare, engage, mentor, and recognize those working to transform HIM practice. Click [here](#) if you are interested in becoming an ACE.

ACE members match their skills and interests with volunteer and career-building opportunities. They form a preferred pool of experts and a network of peers transforming HIM. It is through mentoring, writing, speaking, and testifying for AHIMA and the Component State Associations (CSA) that ACE members share their e-HIM expertise and accelerate change. ACE members attain personal recognition and acknowledgment by peers, employers, and the healthcare industry. You can use these members to help you and your CSA. Click [here](#) to visit the ACE directory to find a member.

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AHIMA Issues Position Statement on Health Data Stewardship

AHIMA has just published a new position statement on data stewardship calling for a nationwide effort among the healthcare and information technology industries, relevant government agencies, federal legislators, employers, and consumers to establish or identify and authorize a national health data stewardship entity (NHDSE). This NHDSE would coordinate the bodies that support the life cycle and collection of data exchanged over electronic and other health information exchange systems and the data stored in a variety of repositories or registries. Currently there is no universal authoritative source, law, or regulation that addresses and defines stakeholder rights and responsibilities and further ensures consistency and integrity in data collection (including common data definitions), distribution, and storage that allows for appropriate use of such data. [Click here](#) to access the position statement.

AHRQ, OCR Issue Final Rule for Patient Safety

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued a final rule for patient safety organizations (PSOs), which is now available [here](#). The rule becomes effective on January 19, 2009, and provides final requirements and procedures for PSOs—new entities with which clinicians and healthcare providers can work to collect, aggregate, and analyze data, within a legally secure environment of privilege and confidentiality protections to identify and reduce patient care risks and hazards. Under interim guidance issued on October 8, AHRQ listed 15 PSOs that will maintain their status during the remainder of the interim period and be required to comply with the final rule once it takes effect. [Click here](#) to view the November 21 *Federal Register* notice.

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New California Privacy Laws Effective January 1

Effective January 1, 2009, two new laws will provide oversight, reporting, stricter requirements, and increased penalties for breaches in the state of California. Unauthorized access is defined as “the inappropriate review or viewing of patient medical information without a direct need for diagnosis, treatment, or other lawful use” as permitted by the California Medical Information Act. For facilities, fines for unlawful disclosure will range from \$25,000–\$250,000 per reported event. Covered facilities are required to report any unlawful or unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of patient health information to the health department and patient no later than five days after detection by the facility or face a \$100 per day fine. In addition the legislation creates the Office of Health Information Integrity within the California Health and Human Services Agency. The legislation also requires referral of licensed individuals to appropriate boards. **Law AB-211** can be found [here](#). **Law SB-541** can be found [here](#).

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CoP News You Can Use

In the last e-alert (see item nine of the November 20 issue) we presented some tips for Community of Practice Terms and Conditions of Use. Here are some additional guidelines.

Things You *Can* Do in the CoP

- Check out Career Assist/Job Bank. Links to Career Assist are located at the bottom of all pages as well as at the top of your Personal Page. You can post job listings and post your resume for free in Career Assist. You can also search Career Assist for resumes of members seeking new opportunities.
- Promote products and services developed by AHIMA that help you in your professional practice.
- Advertise a seminar or event sponsored by a component state association, CoP, or AHIMA.
- Post a brief biography of yourself to share with other members. Select the “**My CoP Bio**” link at the top of your Personal Page and click “**Edit Bio**” to post your biography.

Things You *Can Not* Do in the CoP

- Solicit a job from others through the CoP by posting threads or directly e-mailing members.
- Post a job opportunity for others in a location other than the Career Assist or solicit other members to fill a position.

- Advertise products or services that AHIMA has not developed. You may advertise through banner advertisements, classified ads, and the vendor directory.
- Advertise a seminar that is given by a private company. Again, this may be promoted in a banner ad or other advertising channels AHIMA offers.
- Post your resume or advertise your services or products through your CoP bio.

To access the CoP, go to www.ahima.org and select **myAHIMA** on the right side. Enter your AHIMA ID number (seven digit number on your membership card) and your **password**.

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FORE Provides Information for Year-end Planned Giving

As the end of the year approaches, the Foundation of Research and Education (FORE) recognizes that many AHIMA members may be reassessing options that will best serve their overall financial planning, particularly in these challenging economic times. There are a number of planned giving options that can be advantageous for tax purposes while still enabling you to support FORE's important mission to advance the HIM profession. With this in mind, FORE is offering access to free information on popular planned giving and estate planning topics. [Click here](#) to access a number of e-brochures that can help with your year-end financial planning. Please visit our [Web page](#) for information on planned giving or other ways to support FORE.

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Get Involved with AHIMA through Elected Positions

It's not too early to start considering a nomination for elected position on the AHIMA Board of Directors, Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education, or the Commission on Certification of Health Informatics and Information Management Professionals. This year we have a new and convenient online application for you to complete. We invite everyone who has an interest in volunteering for an AHIMA elected position to submit an application to serve. **The deadline for elected positions is January 30, 2009.** Click [here](#) for more information.

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IFHRO Announces 2010 Meeting

The International Federation of Health Records Organizations (IFHRO) will be holding its 16th congress **November 15-19, 2010, in Milan, Italy.** The focus of the meeting is "Better Information for Better Health." [Click here](#) for more information.

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Study Finds Location Can Affect Safety, Care for Chronically Ill

A recent survey published in *Health Affairs* studied chronically ill adults in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The results found major differences among countries in terms of access, safety, and care efficiency. An abstract of the article is available [here](#).

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Joint Commission Report Recommends Changes for the Hospital of the Future

Last week the Joint Commission released a white paper, "Health Care at the Crossroads: Guiding Principles for the Development of the Hospital of the Future" outlining steps hospitals can take to meet the demands of the future. The report recommends action in five areas: economics, technology, patient care, staffing, and hospital design. The complete document is available [here](#).

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HL7 Announces New CDA Implementation Guides

Health Level Seven (HL7) recently approved four new implementation guides for clinical document architecture (CDA). The CDA Implementation Guide Personal Healthcare Monitoring reports are available [here](#).

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ANSI Develops Health IT Work Group

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has developed a new work group to promote convergence within the global clinical research and healthcare arenas. The newly formed EHR Clinical Research Value Case work group will identify priorities for the harmonization of the technical standards that are necessary to ensure the interoperability of electronic health records and clinical research applications. [Click here](#) for more information.

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Report Outlines Actions to Cut Healthcare Waste

The National Priorities Partnership recently released a report, "National Priorities and Goals," which outlines six priorities that target healthcare reform in ways that will eliminate waste, harm, and disparities. The report is designed to be an action agenda to transform healthcare by better investing resources to improve patient care and outcomes. The complete report is available [here](#).

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