Editor’s Note
By: Sherisse Monteiro

While studying for my RHIT exam I began to notice that some of my notes that are only a year or two old were too outdated to use! This of course forced me to seek out updated texts from AHIMA and MaHIMA’s resources. One year of HIM changes can rival another professions changes over several years! While we are all trying to stay ahead of the curve I find I am increasingly relying on the presentations at MaHIMA’s conferences and for updates on specific study domains. Whenever an agenda is sent out for a conference I immediately comb through my notes to see what relevant information I need to get ready for my exam. It never fails; there is always something new and fresh to assist me with my studies. More importantly, I get to speak with professionals that have taken the exam. They know better than anyone what I need to succeed because they have been there. I cannot ask any of my books a question about the exam and get a response back right away! I stress to students and recent grads, you are really missing out so JOIN US!

Student Editorial Advisory Board:
Julianne Blanch
Wendy Zagroski
Janene Brome

Please feel free to contact me at smonteiro1@partners.org or 617-697-9319 if you have ideas or suggestions for articles and/or for information on how to get involved with MaHIMA.

TOP

President’s Message
By: Mary Radley, RHIA

Dear Fellow HIM Professionals,

My term as President has flown by and this will be my last ‘President’s Message’ for the newsletter. I have found this to be one of the most rewarding volunteer experiences that I have ever had! I would encourage everyone to get involved in state and national HIM committees and participate actively in the
On the Web at MaHIMA.org

Only a few weeks left to register for the New England HIMA Annual Conference May 6-8, 2012 at Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

How to Join & Get Involved

Latest Postings in the MaHIMA Job Bank

discussions and advocacy efforts. There is a tremendous amount of change underway in healthcare, especially in our HIM profession. Together we can make a positive difference! During my tenure as your President I have met many wonderful and talented people in our field, learned more about the value and importance of AHIMA and MaHIMA resources and have participated more actively in advocacy at the state and federal levels. As a state association it is important for MaHIMA to continue to grow and offer networking and education sessions that will strengthen us both personally and as a group of HIM professionals. Together we can debate, learn, approach new changes with knowledge and be confident that there is peer support and a variety of resources available to help us navigate the ever-changing environment.

The news of the potential delay of the ICD-10 implementation has many of us wondering how we should adjust our implementation schedules and what the overall impact will be if this delay is significant. Most of the professionals that I have spoken with have said their organizations are moving ahead with their current plan and may consider altering their timelines once there is a final decision. This is consistent with AHIMA’s recommendation to ‘stay the course’ until there is a final decision on any implementation date change.

At the AHIMA Winter Team Talks and Hill Day in Washington DC in March, ICD-10 was certainly a topic of discussion! HIM professionals from across the country spent a day (March 27) on Capitol Hill meeting with their congressional representatives to share information about the HIM profession and our role in many of the current health care mandates and initiatives. In those meetings we shared information about the benefits of ICD10 and the impacts of delayed implementation. The timing of Hill Day gave us an opportunity to share important information that could inform our congressional representatives on this topic and hopefully gather their support when this topic comes up for reconsideration and a vote. We shared many reasons why it is important to implement ICD-10 sooner rather than later.

The AHIMA website contains excellent information and tools outlining how you can also help and participate in advocacy efforts on important HIM topics. After logging into the AHIMA website, click on ‘Advocacy and Public Policy’ on the blue toolbar at the top of the AHIMA website. This will bring you to AHIMA Advocacy Assistant which is an interactive, web-based tool that addresses advocacy and government relations at the federal and state level. Currently there are letter templates to customize on ICD-10 implementation and Patient-Data Matching. There is also an easy to use tool to locate the names and addresses of the congressional representatives from your home and work zip codes.

SAVE THE DATES for these upcoming meetings:
• May 6 – 8, New England Annual Meeting (Mohegan Sun)
• May 22nd, MaHIMA Hill Day at the State House in Boston (this year we will be having a joint meeting with the New England Chapter of HIMSS)

Feel free to contact me anytime at 617-355-5502, or by email at mary.radley@childrens.harvard.edu.

Best Wishes,
Mary

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Mary Radley, RHIA, President, MaHIMA
mary.radley@childrens.harvard.edu

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONS:

Awards
Spring 2011 Award Winners Announced

By: Jackie Raymond, RHIA, Chair, Awards Committee

MaHIMA HIM Advocacy Award Winner, 2011: Heather Hedlund, RHIA, CHPS

MaHIMA Champion Award Winner, 2011: Susan Pepple

MaHIMA Professional Achievement Award Winner, 2011: Mark Haas
(Mark will be awarded the Professional Achievement Award at the Annual Meeting in May at Mohegan Sun)

Upcoming MaHIMA Award deadlines:

- Retirees – please notify Jackie Raymond if you are planning to retire or have retired from HIM in 2011
- HIM Innovation Award-September 30, 2012
- Legislator of the Year Award-September 30, 2012
- HIM Advocacy Award-September 30, 2012
- Outreach Award-December 31, 2012
- Champion Award-December 31, 2012
- Professional Achievement Award-December 31, 2012

If you know worthy individuals to nominate for the above awards please visit http://www.mahima.org/awards_program/

Questions regarding award nominations can be addressed to Jackie Raymond, RHIA, Chairman, MaHIMA Awards Committee at jraymond@partners.org or 617-582-5204.

http://www.mahima.org/awards_program/

Communications

Committee Updates

By: Jeanne Fernandes, RHIA, Director, Communications

The Communications Committee has been working to enhance member and public communication regarding MaHIMA and MaHIMA events.

A newly formed team has begun to work on developing a MaHIMA Long Term Care – Post Acute Care Forum. The team plans to establish educational and networking opportunities that are relevant to the LTC-Post Acute Care sector. The team will be promoting the forum at upcoming MaHIMA meetings and at the NE State Annual Meeting. If you have experience or interest in this area we welcome your participation. Please contact me.

We continue to work on website updates. The Committee is working on adding the “History of MaHIMA” to the website. We also plan to enhance the member Awards page to better highlight the award winners. If you have comments or suggestions for website improvements, please contact me.

The Committee continues to develop member e-Surveys, Job Alerts and e-Alerts to understand the needs of members and to keep our members informed of industry and Association news and events.

Our Social Networking Team is working on enhancing and integrating MaHIMA’s online presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. We encourage you to follow us online:

facebook www.facebook.com/massachusetts.health.information.management.association

Linkedin www.linkedin.com/company/massachusetts-health-information-management-association-mahima-

twitter www.twitter.com/MaHIMAResources

Patrick Zummo, a member of our Communications Committee and Social Media Team, recently wrote an article for his company blog. In this very well written article, Patrick addresses some of the invalid criticisms of ICD-10. Don't miss this article, Turtle Bites and the Refutation of ICD-10 Criticisms, on Galen Healthcare Solutions blog. Great work Patrick!

Volunteering with MaHIMA is a rewarding experience. If you have an interest in working with the Committee on any of these initiatives, please contact me.

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Education

Committee Updates & Announcements
By: Diana Lindo, RHIT, CCS

Upcoming Meetings for Spring 2012:

- April 10, 2012 - Coding Roundtable Meeting "Rheumatology", New England Sinai Hospital, Stoughton, MA
- May 6 - 8, 2012 - New England Health Information Management Associations Annual Conference, Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT (held in conjunction with the AHIMA Long Term Care Group's Spring Meeting)
- May 22, 2012 - MAHIMA's Annual Beacon Hill Day & Legislative Seminar, held jointly with NE HIMSS (New England Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society), State House, Boston, MA

Hope to see you at one of our events!

Finance

Report for October 2011 - December 2011
By: Linda A. Hyde, RHIA, Finance Committee Chair

At the end of the first six months of the association year we have income of $43,000 and expenses $58,000. 68% of our income is from the meetings held in the first six months of the year with 12% as the Massachusetts proceeds from the NE HIM annual meeting, 11% from AHIMA rebates and 7% from sales of the Legislative manual. Expenses are higher than income primarily due to the majority of our AHIMA rebate income coming in the third quarter as well as additional income from the remainder of our meetings and projected sales of the Legislative manual. 42% of expenses are for meetings, 37% represent administrative costs, 16% for AHIMA summer team talks and House of Delegates meetings. The Finance committee will be meeting to review the detailed budget report and determine if we need to re-forecast any income or expense items for the remainder of the year.

As of the end of December MaHIMA has $96,451 in assets with 89% ($86,202) in the Merrill Lynch and Fidelity accounts for reserves. This represents approximately 9 months of expenses which is consistent with last year's experience.

Legislative Affairs

Legislative Updates & Announcements
By: Ellen MacMullen, RHIA, Director, Legislation/Advocacy
Environmental Scan is a phrase you may have heard about over the past several years. AHIMA requested that the Component State Associations (CSAs) survey members with pre-determined questions to obtain information across the country about emerging issues facing us each day. We at MAHIMA have sent out e-Surveys to our members and report the results back to AHIMA. We also send the results to our members via an e-Alert.

AHIMA has decided to review this process. At the House of Delegates meeting in October 2011, it was decided that the response rate across the country was low and the current process was not working well. The Environmental Scan House Team decided to take on the charge of revamping the current process.

You may first ask "What is Environmental Scan?" I know I did, so I googled it. Here is the most simple definition I could find from Businessdictionary.com:

'Careful monitoring of an organization's internal and external environments for early signs of opportunities and threats that may influence its current and future plans. In comparison, surveillance is confined to a specific objective or a narrow sector.'

Read more: [http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/environmental-scanning.html#ixzz1ngP5rXo9](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/environmental-scanning.html#ixzz1ngP5rXo9)

In relation to our profession, the definition is: Environmental scanning is a process that collects information on trends and priorities that are impacting or influencing the HIM profession. This information can:

- Feed into the strategic planning process
- Identify emerging opportunities, threats or concerns and adjust plans in a timely manner
- Capitalize on opportunities or avert threats

Read more at AHIMA's State Leaders and House CoP, Community Resources - Environmental Scanning.

The House Team for Environmental Scan held a meeting in late February to brainstorm on ideas as to how to move forward with the process and have it be meaningful. We are all immersed in our day to day work life and cannot lose site of how trends, infrastructure and technology will impact our future. Here is a link to an article found in Healthcare IT News that speaks to the 11 Healthcare Data Trends in 2012, [http://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/11-healthcare-data-trends-2012?page=0,0](http://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/11-healthcare-data-trends-2012?page=0,0). The House Team also voted on the top four strategic issues that were identified at the annual meeting. The top four issues that we felt were most applicable to the Environmental Scan House Team are marked with asterisks below. You can click on the link to obtain detail of the issue.

- **Strategic Issue #1 EHR Implementation** *
- **Strategic Issue #2 Future Skills of Coders** *
- **Strategic Issue #3 Lead the Revenue Cycle** *
- **Strategic Issue #4 Master HIM Practice Realms** *
- **Strategic Issue #5 Position the HIM Professional as the Chief Information Officer, Chief Knowledge Officer, or Data Integrity Executive** *
- **Strategic Issue #6 Understand Emerging Issues** *
- **Strategic Issue #7 Advance the Profession through Meaningful Use, Healthcare Reform, and Accountable Care Organizations** *
- **Strategic Issue #8 Skills for a Decision Support Executive** *
- **Strategic Issue #9 Urge Employers to Employ AHIMA Credentialed Professionals** *
- **Strategic Issue #10 HIM Professional's Position and Relevancy in the Healthcare Industry** *
- **Strategic Issue #11 HIM Professionals and Other Associations** *

You will be hearing more about the environmental scan process as it evolves.

SAVE THE DATE!

MAHIMA is partnering with the New England chapter of HIMMS to host our very own Beacon Hill Day on Tuesday May 22, 2012. The Legislative Affairs Committee is busy working out the details to provide you with a day full of education, networking and a tour of our State House. Stay 'connected' for the details.

TOP

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**LEGAL CONNECTIONS:**

**Will the White House Report on Consumer Data Privacy**

**Impact Health Information?**

*By: Colin J. Zick, JD*

Foley Hoag LLP

The White House has finally released its long-anticipated report on consumer data privacy called *The 60-page White House report, "Consumer Data Privacy in a Networked World: Framework for Protecting Privacy and Promoting Innovation in the Global Digital Economy"*, is the start of what promises to be a fascinating legislative and regulatory process.

While this report claims that it "builds on the recommendations of the Department of Commerce Internet Policy Task Force's December 2010 report, Commercial Data Privacy and Innovation in the...

- **Security:** Consumers have a right to secure and responsible handling of personal data.
- **Access and Accuracy:** Consumers have a right to access and correct personal data in usable formats, in a manner that is appropriate to the sensitivity of the data and the risk of adverse consequences to consumers if the data is inaccurate.
- **Focused Collection:** Consumers have a right to reasonable limits on the personal data that companies collect and retain.
- **Accountability:** Consumers have a right to...
Internet Economy: A Dynamic Policy Framework,” that prior report was a false start and this now marks the real start of an effort for comprehensive federal privacy legislation. Because data privacy and security is now seen as a matter of national competitiveness and there is a desire to avoid falling behind the EU in this regard, it is more likely than not that Congress will act on consumer privacy legislation this year.

The report sets out seven core elements that it expects to be established:

- Individual Control: Consumers have a right to exercise control over what personal data companies collect from them and how they use it.
- Transparency: Consumers have a right to easily understandable and accessible information about privacy and security practices.
- Respect for Context: Consumers have a right to expect that companies will collect, use and disclose personal data in ways that are consistent with the context in which consumers provide the data.
- Have personal data handled by companies with appropriate measures in place to assure they adhere to the Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights.

What does this mean for healthcare? Mostly it means that rest of the U.S. economy is starting to catch up to healthcare, which has been in the forefront of data privacy since the passage of HIPAA in 1996. It also means that there will be increased legislative activity in this area, some of which may have effects whether intended or unintended on health information (such as cloud-based applications and storage). We may also see a federal regulation of breaches notification which could pre-empt state rules in that regard, although it is still unclear which agency of the federal government will oversee this area and how it might interact with the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Health and Human Services.

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**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

**Healthcare Reform - Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA)**

*By: Pat Rioux, RHIT
Product Management, eClinicalWorks*

President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) into law on March 23, 2010 which provides a phased introduction of a new comprehensive health insurance system with reforms that will eliminate “some of the worst practices of the insurance companies” such as pre-existing condition discrimination, lifetime and annual coverage caps, and lack of price competition.

Private insurance is preserved and the system lets the poor buy insurance through subsidies. Tax credits are provided for small businesses and non-profits. Consumers can review coverage and prices with like-to-like comparisons. Some of the popular provisions of the law allow parents to keep their children on their insurance policies until age 26 and prevents discrimination against pre-existing conditions for all consumers.

It has become clear since the law passed that employers will still continue to offer healthcare coverage and benefits to employees and their families but we can expect them to ask for proactive partnering with health plan members to improve health and lower costs.

Health care reform is not without controversy, however; there is a challenge to the law that is referred to as the “individual mandate” which requires all Americans to purchase health insurance in 2012. This mandate has been challenged in 26 states because the coverage will be provided by Medicaid. The Supreme Court has announced that they will hear that controversial part of the act in March, 2012. Stay tuned for the judicial decision on this mandate.

**LINKS:**

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA: Public Law 111–148) – full text:


Key Features of the Law:


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**MaHIMA Announces New Member Benefit:**

**Discount on Anatomy and Physiology Refresher Course**

The Board of Directors of MaHIMA is pleased to announce that it has negotiated a discount on anatomy and physiology training for its members and their colleagues.

The training, provided as an online course, was developed by Barry Libman Inc., a leading provider of...
ICD-10 Update

By: Linda Hyde, RHIA

By now everyone has heard that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is re-evaluating the implementation date for ICD-10 in the United States. We should expect to hear more details about HHS plan in April but what does this mean for us now? Ultimately ICD-10-CM/PCS is still coming. An extended implementation may give everyone more time to ensure a successful transition but should not be used as a reason to stop or slow down the progress organizations are making in their ICD-10 implementation plans.

AHIMA has issued a press release and public policy statement urging HHS not to delay ICD-10 and providing rationale for why we should not lose momentum. They also created a ‘Ten for 10’ document listing all the reasons why we need ICD-10. These documents can be found in the ICD-10 News section on AHIMA’s website, http://www.ahima.org/.

The MAHIMA ICD-10 Forum will schedule its next meeting once more details on the new implementation plans from HHS are available. Anyone who is interested in participating in this forum can contact Sue Marre at smarre@nesinai.org.

Time Periods Are Tricky: Check Authorization Before You Release

By: Nilda Tamburello, RHIA

VP of Release of Information
Medical Record Associates LLC

Releasing protected health information (PHI) is a complicated process that needs regular updating. The general privacy rule regarding ROI is that the patient's medical record information may only be released to third parties if the patient has consented to such disclosure. On the face of it, it's seemingly a straightforward process. However, there are levels of complexity that make the process difficult to manage.

For starters, there are both state and federal laws which govern the process. The most stringent law applies but in some cases those laws conflict with each other. For example, some states allow disclosure to any person with the consent of the patient. Other states permit release on patient consent only to specific classes of persons (lawyers, employers, government agencies, etc). Consent in some states is binding and mandatory while other states merely grant permission to disclose.

Under HIPAA, the only circumstance where ROI is permissible without expressed consent is when covered entities are releasing PHI to facilitate treatment, payment and/or healthcare operations (TPO). Even this area is under pressure of more regulation as there are rules pending that require an audit trail of this information movement.

A New Auditor in Town

Secondly, new privacy and security audits are now underway by the Office of the National Coordinator. The auditing firm of KPMG has been assigned to conduct 150 privacy and security audits in 2012. This is the first proactive compliance effort under the security rule and will cover all types of covered entities from hospitals to physician offices and pharmaceutical companies. Privacy will be an important part of the ONC audits as privacy is the “what” of HIPAA. However, the audits will also cover technical security or the “how” of maintaining privacy.

HIM professionals should be working hand-in-hand with their compliance and IT departments to shore up policies and procedures and prepare for the ONC audits. Specifically for HIM professionals, now is the time to shore-up the ROI process within your own department and asses all other areas within your organization where patient information is released (e.g. business office, radiology, outpatient testing, etc.).
The best place to start in assessing the ROI process is with patient authorizations. In general, the ROI patient authorization will include:

- Patient’s name and identifying information (at least 2 data points)
- Institution/care provider directed to release the information
- Specific information to be released
- Identity of the party to receive the information
- Legal language authorizing ROI
- Signature of patient or authorized individual and date it was signed
- Time period for which the release remains valid

The time period for allowable ROI is where this step becomes tricky and may require continual quality checks and staff education. If the release involves lawyers and/or court cases, it is often difficult to ascertain an end date. In those cases the language may need to reflect a continuing authorization that states “until the end of the current litigation for that specific case or until the end of the case.”

ROI staff should be trained to carefully check dates on patient authorizations so as to avoid a potential breach of information within HIM. Your organization has enough concerns about information breach with missing laptops and stolen back-up tapes. Don’t let HIM be another area of concern!

For more information or specific questions about difficult ROI scenarios, attend MRA’s session at the MaHIMA Annual Conference, June 4-5, 2012: “Solving Seven Difficult ROI Scenarios”, or visit MRA’s educational blog online at: www.mrahis.com.

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Highlight from MaHIMA's Winter Meeting & Coding Seminar
By: Sherisse Monteiro

MaHIMA’s Winter Meeting agenda was full of interesting and meaningful information for HIM professionals, students and recent graduates. Although we had a wonderful turn out, there is always room for improvement. Please visit our Calendar of Events to see what upcoming seminar you can fit into your busy schedule. Below is a link to the photo’s from the meeting.

Link to Winter Meeting Pictures: https://picasaweb.google.com/MaHIMAcentral/20120127MAHIMAWinterMeeting?authkey=Gv1sRgCNGy2uKD592GmwE

I also included a snippet of one of the coding presentations by Barry Libman to give you a sample of what you’re missing out on! Hope to see you soon!

2012 CPT Update Highlights: Partial Presentation
By: Barry Libman, MS, RHIA, CCS, CCS-P, President, Barry Libman, Inc.

TOP

COLLEGE CONNECTIONS:
BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Why Hire a CCA (Certified Coding Associate)?
Joy P. Rose, MSA, RHIA, CCS
Assistant Professor/ HITECH Grant Program Coordinator

I would like you all to take a moment and reflect on why you should hire a CCA and how they can benefit you and your organization.

- The CCA is the only credential currently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) (AHIMA)
- There are more than 8000 people with a CCA (AHIMA) reflecting a growing body of professionals
- A CCA have positioned themselves stating: “I’m committed to a career in coding and to prove it to you I became certified by passing a national examination.”
- A CCA is more likely to continue their education and attain further advanced credentials which will enhance your department and organization
- A CCA is a credential from a well-established organization with more rigorous standards for credentialing than other organizations

What an organization needs in a coder is a person with a good solid foundation in coding guidelines. A CCA provides this to you. When beginning a career in coding one does not become a first-rate coder until they have a few years experience under their belt. This is recognized by the AHIMA recommendation that a CCS have three years of coding experience.
What does a CCA study to pass their examination?
Clinical Classification Systems, Reimbursement Methodologies, Health Records and Data Content, Compliance, Information Technologies, and Confidentiality & Privacy, Anatomy & Physiology, and Medical Terminology

As our need for coders continues to grow, we as a profession should look toward the long-term benefits of hiring an individual with a solid basic coding foundation and grow that individual into someone who may become the cornerstone of your coding department.

A CCA has the sound knowledge of coding principals and conventions that you build into a stellar employee. Think about hiring a CCA.


Joy P. Rose, MSA, RHIA, CCS
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FISHER COLLEGE

Valerie Mc Cleary, MS, RHIA, Director of HIM Programs

Fisher College is excited to promote the new online Bachelor’s degree in Health Information Management as a way to facilitate earning a degree with the convenience and flexibility of online learning. Accreditation is being sought for this new program originally to begin in March now scheduled for May 2012, read more @ http://www.fisher.edu/academics/bachelor-degrees/management/Health-Information-Management.html

Enrollment in the Associate degree in Health Information Technology and the Medical Coding certificate continues to grow with very high levels of graduate and employer satisfaction survey ratings.

The virtual AS HIT student internships arranged with AHIMA, Charts in Time (a HIM vendor) and out of state facilities are underway, where available, as an alternative to the limited availability of physical “onsite” internships.

Fisher HIM faculty members have undergone recent AHIMA WebEx training on all of the Virtual Lab systems. Virtual Lab assignments continue to be incorporated into the online courses.

The online Blackboard Learning Management teaching system used at Fisher College has purchased Collaborate. Collaborate (replaces the previously used Elluminate Live system) positively enhances live interactive sessions and HIM tutoring over the web. Fisher HIM faculty members have completed training on the Collaborate system and are using it actively in all online courses.

Fisher’s HIM programs continue to adapt to the needs of the students and the healthcare industry including instituting new programs and technology where possible.

Valerie Mc Cleary, MS, RHIA
Director of HIM Programs
Fisher College
Voice: 727-433-2816
vmccleary@fisher.edu
www.fisher.edu

LABOURE COLLEGE

By Maureen Smith

Programs offered:
- Coding Certificate Program
- Health Information Professional Certificate Program (open to students interested in the health information field who hold an associate degree or higher)
MaHIMA Connect Newsletter

Application and program information can be found at the College's website:  www.laboure.edu

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