

APRIL 2019- PRESIDENT LETTER

Dear Colleagues and Friends:



I can't believe my tenure as President is coming to an end on June 30, 2019! It has been a great year, and we have accomplished much. The Education Committee has put together many webinars and workshops. The Communication Committee, along with Cheryl Rau, our Member at Large, have visited schools and educated students about our profession. The Legislative Committee has been working with the Massachusetts Hospital Association to try to refile bill HB 1205. A summary and text of this bill is as follows:

Summary

This bill implements the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy protections for accessing and sharing health information between providers and payers within existing state laws. The federal HIPAA requirements allows for the exchange of data between providers and payers in a confidential and secure manner to streamline treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. Unfortunately the state law is silent and in some cases may be confusing due to prior case law interpretations. The goal of this bill is to align federal and state standards that would also apply a uniform and consistent set of security and confidentiality criteria for clinicians, hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies, skilled nursing facilities, and health insurers. This bill would ensure that uniform standards for sharing of confidential and highly protected information between providers, including the receipt of test results from referring providers.

Bill Text

SECTION 1. Section 12G of Chapter 112 of the General Laws, as so appearing in the 2014 official edition, is hereby amended by adding at the end of the section the following new paragraph: Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the protections established under this section also shall apply to any disclosure of information by a physician, a health care facility as defined in section 9C of this Chapter, or any other medical provider or by an agent of any of the foregoing to another healthcare provider or carrier, as such terms are defined in section 1 of chapter 176O of the general laws, as well as a government program so long as such disclosure is made in connection with the treatment, payment or health care operations, and such disclosure is in compliance with applicable federal privacy laws. The terms treatment, payment and health care operations shall have the same definitions as used in the federal privacy regulations, 45 C.F.R. § 164.501.

On March 25, 2019, Robin Andrews, the MaHiMA President-Elect, Laura Caravetta, the Director of the Legislative Committee and Advocacy, Linda Hyde, the Finance Chair, and I attended the 2019 AHIMA Advocacy Summit in Washington D.C. The summit focused on the following four topics:

1. Align HIPAA "Right of Access" with ONC Health IT Certification Functionality

2. Encourage Note Sharing with Patients in Real Time
3. Extending the HIPAA Individual Right of Access to Non-Covered Entities (NCEs)
4. Patient Matching

During our visit to Washington D.C., the four of us had the opportunity to visit the offices of Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sen. Ed Markey, respectively. We also met with several of our Congressional leaders as well, including, among others: Rep. Stephen Lynch, Rep. Joe Kennedy III, Rep. Bill Keating and Congressman McGovern's aide.

In addition to highlighting what our MaHIMA board members and committees have been doing, I also wanted to remind you of several upcoming MaHIMA events. Please consider attending our next Strategic Planning Meeting that will be held at the Norwood Hospital on May 3rd from 9:00 am -1:00pm. I encourage you to join us in person as we brainstorm for next year. All members of MaHIMA are welcome to attend!

The Planning Committee has worked very hard to come up with a great agenda for this year's annual meeting at the Sea Crest in Falmouth, which will take place June 9 – 11th. I would like to invite all of you to the Welcome Reception on Sunday, June 9th from 5:30 pm- 6:30 pm. Not only will this be a great networking opportunity, it will also allow us to visit with old friends while enjoying the sunset. I hope to see everyone there!

As always, I challenge all of you to participate on a committee or task force. It is such a rewarding and fulfilling experience. If you are interested, click [here](#) for the volunteer page for more information.

Best Wishes for a great year to come!

[Bibi Von Malder, RHIT, President MaHIMA](#)