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### **CPR and the Role of the HIM Professional**

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**Leslie:** Last month we asked our readers to send us their thoughts related to the concept of e-HIM and what it will take for health information management (HIM) professionals to move their organizations toward a computerized patient record (CPR). Though we only received a few comments from our readers (please continue to send your thoughts!) there was a prevailing theme: The unique skills of HIM professionals are critical to the success of any CPR and e-HIM related project.

**Patty:** HIM skills are of particular importance for projects such as implementing an imaging system, clinical data repository or clinical physician order entry (CPOE), as well as enabling remote access to automated clinical data. Each of these projects brings us one step closer to achieving the vision of a CPR and each of them requires an in-depth understanding of data collection, data usage, document management and storage.

**Leslie:** It seems critical for HIM professionals to know of their organization's plan to migrate to a CPR. Does it begin with automating nurse's notes or lab reports for example, which usually improves health care practitioner efficiency but results in more paper? Or perhaps the starting point is the implementation of an imaging system or building a repository.

**Patty:** We have discussed this topic in the past and held the belief that the best way to know what is being planned is to ask several key informal and formal leaders within the organization. This includes key physicians, your boss, department heads outside of HIM, and most importantly, individuals from the information systems (IS) department. If you are fortunate enough to have a position within the HIM department that functions as a liaison to IS, tap into this infrastructure to obtain information about future plans.

**Leslie:** It's not enough just to know the plan. How does one get involved?

**Patty:** As HIM professionals, we need to promote ourselves and our expertise to individuals who are driving organizations toward a CPR. Once we get their ear, it's important to volunteer and take on a formal role in the planning and implementation of CPR-related projects. We also need to be on the lookout for key success factors such as physician and executive sponsors, medical staff opinions regarding automation and the involvement of users in the selection and implementation processes. HIM professionals can be instrumental in applying project management principles to CPR projects by assisting in the coordination of meetings and activities and participating in vendor selection, process redesign and implementation. In general, HIM professionals who are actively involved in CPR projects have had more ownership over the changes in HIM practice.

**Leslie:** Several industry-leading magazines such as ADVANCE and the Journal of AHIMA feature HIM professionals involved in the transition from paper records toward a CPR. Learning from these examples is

an important part of our journey toward developing the skills needed to play a role in automating medical records and associated processes.

**Patty:** A quick search of ADVANCE's Web site at [www .ADVANCEforHIM.com](http://www.ADVANCEforHIM.com) returned articles that described the changes in HIM practices. Let's take a look at a few case studies described in the articles:

#### Case 1

*Facility:* Kaiser Permanente, Denver, CO

*Practice Setting:* Managed care provider

*Project Description:* Worked with IBM to develop a CPR. Clinicians enter notes directly into a computer present in the exam room. Test results are delivered via e-mail. Prescriptions are written online.

*Impact to HIM:* Coding is done automatically because data is stored as text. Physicians access data online negating the need for record retrieval. Transcription has been virtually eliminated.

#### Case 2

*Facility:* Scripps Health, San Diego, CA

*Practice Setting:* Health care delivery network

*Project Description:* Implemented QuickRecord and QuickChart, a document storage and delivery application.

*Impact to HIM:* Reduction in filing 2,000 to 3,000 reports per week. Increased report delivery turnaround time and reduced one full-time equivalent (FTE). Documents are stored in a data repository (QuickRecord) and physicians can access them via the Internet (QuickChart).

#### Case 3

*Facility:* Shannon Medical Center, San Angelo, TX

*Practice Setting:* Acute care facility

*Project Description:* Implemented McKessonHBOC's imaging solution

*Impact to HIM:* In addition to the many benefits of imaging, Shannon developed a remote coding program and solved a coding shortage problem.

#### Case 4

*Facility:* West Florida Medical Center, Pensacola, FL

*Practice Setting:* Outpatient clinic (150 physicians)

*Project Description:* Implemented Practice Partner Patient Records from Physician Micro Systems Inc., an EMR system.

*Impact to HIM:* The HIM department is now responsible for managing information and not paper. They are charged with ensuring that the EMR is used to its fullest functionality. Eliminated record retrieval activities. Physicians can access records from anywhere in the network.

## Case 5

*Facility:* Shands at Lake Shore, Lake City, IA

*Practice Setting:* Acute care

*Project Description:* Implemented a "Life Time Clinical Record" that can be accessed via the Internet. Life Time Clinical Record includes lab, radiology and physician dictated reports.

*Impact to HIM:* Coders access key reports by signing onto a secure Web site to facilitate the coding process. Physicians complete records from remote locations online via the Web site. Access to records online eliminates need for HIM staff to retrieve a paper record. Leslie: These case studies illustrate the point we made last month that HIM functions change with the introduction of electronic records. The transition in the case studies above mostly affected filing and record retrieval activities and the way medical records are accessed. Coding processes were also affected. These changes allow HIM professionals to focus less on how paper is managed and more on managing information.

**Patty:** In the book, The Role of Health Information Managers in CPR Projects, A Practical Guide, by Margaret Amatayakul, MBA, RHIA, FHIMSS, the author provides a practical roadmap and checklist for HIM professionals to participate in the implementation of electronic medical records within their facilities.

**Leslie:** I like the concept of checklists as they help us focus our efforts. What are the main activities included in the checklist?

**Patty:** The author identifies five main areas:

1. Make yourself an expert. Becoming an expert requires one to keep up to date on health care trends, regulations and standard setting developments, technology and accrediting bodies. In addition, it includes acquiring new skills such as project management and a good understanding of general information technology and your organization's CPR plan. It also includes initiating changes brought about by regulation or changes in procedures.
2. Help others gain expertise. Identify key individuals with whom you would like to share information about the CPR. Share what you learn regarding the status of the CPR and what is happening in your area and across the country in relation to CPR advancements. Provide presentations followed by discussion. Share articles and be sure to include your name and comments on the article. Provide CPR facts via e-mail or other methods regularly.
3. Make sure that you get credit as the expert. Write articles, participate at meetings and modify your job description so that it recognizes the breadth of HIM responsibilities, knowledge and skills. Document ideas to your boss.
4. Take on volunteer assignments. Start a committee or serve on one. Participate in activities that enable you to promote your knowledge and expertise.
5. Educate others on the CPR. Educate the following: Yourself, your staff, physicians and other health care providers and administration. In addition, educate vendors on your organization's requirements/vision so that they can better help your organization.

**Leslie:** Excellent suggestions for promoting HIM expertise and staying abreast of CPR activities. HIM professionals will need to respond to challenges that are changing the face of HIM and proactively redesign workflow and processes as the opportunities present themselves. Most important, HIM professionals must be perceived as the champions of CPR; ready, willing and able to help our health care colleagues make CPR a reality.

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