



THE NORTHLINE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Renee Skeels, RHIT

Hi Everyone!

This has been a very busy time. The Fall Coding Workshop in Anchorage on November 8th and 9th was an outstanding success. I want to give my thanks to Terry Keith, Cathy Gross and Karen Glaser for putting on such a great event and making things run so smoothly. Prior to the conference, we successfully implemented our on-line registration. A special thanks Terry Keith for working so diligently on this and making it successful.

The end of September and the first of October saw the AKHIMA delegates, Doreen Booth and I in Philadelphia for AHIMA's annual convention. We were there early to participate in the House of Delegates where five resolutions were passed. This was a very ambitious meeting. If you ever have any questions or concerns about what is going on nationally, please be sure to contact us. We are here to serve you, the membership.

Coming up is a busy time for everyone with the holidays in November and December – however, please take some time to consider placing yourself on the ballot to be an AKHIMA board member. I feel that it is important that we give back to a profession that has given us so much. AKHIMA is truly an association of volunteers and we need you.

Please take a few minutes and read this newsletter. Our Newsletter Committee has done a great job in putting this publication together.

Happy Holidays!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Leslie Gordon, RHIA, is the new Assistant Professor and HIM Program Director at the University of Alaska Southeast. Leslie recently completed her Bachelor's degree in Health Information Management through the University of St. Scholastica in Duluth, Minnesota, and passed her RHIA exam just prior to the 2007 spring conference.

AKHIMA is proud to recognize Leslie for her accomplishments, and for her efforts in furthering the HIM profession in the state of Alaska.



AKHIMA Mission Statement

Our Mission is to promote the art and science of health information management by achieving and maintaining high standards of competency, developing education programs, and promoting professional growth.

Along with physicians, hospital administrators, and other health professionals, we continually strive to improve the quality of health care information for all Alaskans. We endeavor to meet challenges of a changing health care delivery system by providing competent assistance and contributions within the scope of our profession.

AKHIMA Board of Directors



2007-2008 Board of Directors:

Renee Skeels, RHIT, President
 Doreen Booth, RHIT, President Elect
 Sharena Sanders, RHIT, Past-President
 Cathy Gross, RHIT, 2nd-Year Director
 Karen Glaser, RHIA, CCS, 1st Year Director
 Michael Gage, RHIT CCS, Secretary
 Terry Keith, RHIA, Treasurer

MEET KAREN GLASER, AKHIMA'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

Happy Holidays for the newest member of the AKHIMA board! Last spring I had the privilege of being elected as your First Year Director. This achievement has been something that I have worked for over the past five years (since moving back to Alaska). I currently work for Providence Health & Services (Alaska) – more commonly known as Providence Alaska Medical Center as the Business Operations Manager for Cardiovascular Services. This position allows me to focus on cardiovascular and peripheral intervention coding along with budgeting process. I have been in my current position for almost two years, and have worked for Providence for almost six. In my former life I oversaw the daily operations of our coding, transcription and distribution areas in Health Information Management.

The past 15 years in the health care field have flown by – from working as an outpatient coder in Milwaukee Wisconsin to transcriptionist to inpatient coder/utilization review in Grand Island, Nebraska to Coding Manager for PAMC and to my current position as Business Manager has truly been a learning experience. During these travels I would be lucky enough to sit for and pass both my CCS and RHIT exams, and am currently attending school yet again for my BA in Accounting. Life can be very busy with two children, a husband and multiple pets! However supporting our local AHIMA chapter is a wonderful opportunity.

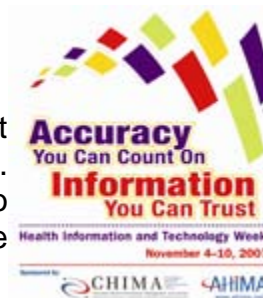
Please have a safe and warm Holiday season!

Karen



Governor Palin Proclaims November 4-10, 2007 Health Information & Technology Week!

Eighteen years ago, the American Health Information Management Association launched its first Health Information and Technology (HIT) Week. Since then, its message of awareness and pride has spread from coast to coast, educating healthcare professionals and consumers on the importance of the people and practices behind health information management (HIM).



For the last three years, Alaska's governor has joined in this celebration and recognizes Health Information Professionals by joining with AHIMA and proclaiming Health Information Technology week to coincide with AHIMA . The official proclamation was on display at the annual fall coding workshop, which was held on November 8 & 9 in Anchorage. Unfortunately, we were unable to obtain a pdf version for publication in this newsletter.

FALL 2007 CODING CONFERENCE

Kelly Butler, MD, CCS, from Dr. Coder & Associates, was the featured speaker at the annual fall coding workshop held on November 8 & 9, 2007 in Anchorage, Alaska. He was a huge hit with attendees, many of whom requested that he return for the spring conference.

Topics featured included E&M coding, ICD-9/CPT/DRG updates, coding for obesity, diabetes, and renal failure. Unfortunately, Dr. Coyle, the guest speaker who was to present on interventional radiology, was called away on an emergency. He has graciously offered to present this topic at the spring coding workshop.

Attendance averaged 50 per day, which is an increase over the past few years. AKHIMA's financial situation has allowed your program committee the financial freedom to schedule in well known, knowledgeable speakers. AKHIMA is working hard to provide valuable educational tools for membership.

SPRING PROGRAM COMMITTEE NEWS

Cathy Gross, RHIT, the program chair for the spring 2008 conference, and Karen Glaser, RHIT, CCS, program co-chair, have been working on speakers for the annual educational and networking event. Tentative plans include a full two days of coding, a management track, a QI/PI track, as well as general sessions scheduled for Thursday morning and Friday afternoon.

Spring Program Committee:

Cathy Gross, RHIT, Chair
Vickie Ament
Renee Iler
Judie Keech

Karen Glaser, RHIT, CCS, Co-Chair
Cherie Rains Frances Maier
Desiree Holm Doreen Booth
Adrianna Foster

If you are interested in helping with planning the 2008 Spring Conference, please contact Cathy at: cathy@akhima.org

TREASURER'S REPORT

Terry Keith, RHIA

Without much pomp and circumstance but with lots of head banging and teeth gnashing we have finally joined the 21st century by offering online registration! What I thought would be a very simple task was not so simple. I'm thankful to Sage Group, our web creator, for being so patient – after all, I am a female and *I DO HAVE THE INNATE FEMALE PREROGATIVE TO CHANGE MY MIND!!* The Fall Workshop registration went relatively smoothly and I even learned how to refund on-line! Thanks to all of you who suffered through this with us and even overpaid then got a refund!

Some simple on-line tips for you:

Membership is a two-step process. The **first step** is to enter your information, including selecting your password. Please include an email address because we plan to transition to email communication vs. snail mail. The **second step** comes to you in the form of an email confirmation letter thanking you for joining and letting you know you can pay on-line or by mail. Please note you are not a member until payment is received! If you do not get the email confirmation letter please notify me immediately. Finally, if you have never signed up on-line as an AKHIMA member, you will need to “join as a new member” – this gets your AKHIMA member number and from then on you simply renew your membership! Clear as mud? Just call or email me with questions!

As mentioned prior, we had a very successful workshop. We are in very good financial shape at this time and look forward to having an outstanding spring conference – so save that date!!

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to thank the AKHIMA board of directors for their submissions for inclusion in this newsletter. Any members who would like to contribute are more than welcome to submit articles for publication. If you know of a member whom you feel needs recognized in our member spotlight, please submit your proposal to me at: cathy@akhima.org.

Thanks!



Update Your AHIMA Profile

Yes, another reminder to update your AHIMA profile. We download your membership information from AHIMA's website to send you newsletters, updates on what your board is doing, as well as important information related to HIM and coding issues. Please take a moment of your time to ensure that your profile is up to date. Also, please remind your fellow AHIMA/AKHIMA members to update their profiles.

QUESTIONS TO PREPARE FOR JOINT COMMISSION LEADERSHIP SESSION

1. How is your Governing Board organized?
2. How are your Board members appointed?
3. How do you evaluate a Board member?
4. What would I hear in the community about your facility?
5. Tell me about your Patient Safety program.
6. Who is responsible for Patient Safety?
7. How do you educate your staff regarding Patient Safety?
8. Do you have a Safety Committee?
9. Do you have a policy on Sentinel Events?
10. Tell me about your Organ donation program.
11. How does the community provide input regarding what their needs are?
12. How do you measure whether you are meeting their needs.
13. Tell me about your Performance Improvement program.

Health Information Exchange Consensus Conference Reinforces Key Role of State-level Entities

CHICAGO, November 12, 2007— Health information exchange (HIE) organizations with public-private governance and a state-wide mission are an important and logical organizational unit for advancing HIE efforts, according to the interim findings of an ongoing study carried out by the Foundation of Research and Education (FORE) of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), under contract to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in the Department of Health and Human Services.

The interim findings, “Building Sustainable Health Information Exchange: Roles for State-Level Public-Private Partnerships,” was the focus of discussion at a consensus conference on Nov. 5-6 in Washington, D.C.—attended by 140 attendees representing 18 states, federal agencies, providers, payers and health information technology vendors. New research identifies three key roles for state level entities: convener, collaborator and operator—and defines each. The conference consisted of panels operational state level entities, updates from the national level, and breakout sessions at which participants contributed directly to the dialogue around the study areas of state-level HIE governance, services and sustainability, and their role in supporting development of nationwide HIE capabilities.

“State-wide governance for health information exchange, grounded in public-private partnership, can help assure coherence between state health policy aims, consumer protections, and local HIE capacity building efforts while providing a critical link to national level initiatives,” observed Lynn Dierker, RN, Project Director.

The conference and preliminary report are part of a FORE project that began in 2006 under an HHS contract. The project’s larger aim is to guide the ongoing development of state-level health information exchange efforts, and their roles in support of the developing nationwide network.

Ray Campbell, Esq., MPH, chair of the Project Steering Committee and Executive Director and CEO, Massachusetts Health Data Consortium noted, “As the Steering Committee has deliberated it has become clear that, while there are necessary variations among state

approaches, we are seeing the emergence of common roles and functions that the state-level entity can and must play.”

Project resources, including the recently released preliminary [report](#), “State Level Health Information Exchange: Roles in Ensuring Governance and Advancing Interoperability,” are available on the project Web site at www.staterhio.org. This report outlines a potential framework for organizing HIE functions and formalizing organizational and sector roles and responsibilities necessary to support the exchange of health information within and across states. Feedback on the preliminary report is welcome and can be provided via the Web site. Also available on the site is an updated version of the “State Level Health Information Exchange Development Workbook: A Guide to Key Issues.” The final report is due in March 2008.

For more information, contact , Theresa Grant, American Health Information Management Association at (312) 233-1100, or email at: theresa.grant@ahima.org



Renae Spohn, MBA, RHIA, CPHQ, FAHIMA, FNAHQ, to Serve as AHIMA Board Liaison for AKHIMA

Greetings from the great state of South Dakota! It is my pleasure to begin working with the Alaska Association starting in January 2008 as your AHIMA Board Liaison. Just to give you a brief introduction, I am a South Dakota native. I graduated in HIM from Dakota State University in Madison, SD in 1984 and then continued on to receive a masters degree from City University, Bellevue, Washington in 1999 as well as some additional information systems education. I worked in acute care as the HIM Director in Cheyenne, Wyoming and in Alamosa, Colorado for almost ten years. Since 1993 I worked in long term care for the Good Samaritan Society, first as an HIM Consultant, then as the Director of Quality Improvement for almost ten years, and currently as the Director of Clinical Applications.

Approximately five years ago, I served as President-elect of the South Dakota association (SDHIMA) followed by a wonderful year as President and then one as the Past President. I then took on a role with the AHIMA Long Term Care (LTC) Practice Council as the co-chair for two years. In January of 2008 I will be starting a 3-year term on the AHIMA Board of Directors. With that role, I will be responsible to serve as a liaison for the Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Michigan HIM associations as well as serving as a liaison for the LTC Practice Council and the newly formed Quality and Secondary Data Use Practice Council.

A board liaison is responsible for staying connected with several state associations and for providing the AHIMA update at the Component State Association (CSA) annual meeting if requested, or if unavailable, assisting in finding an appropriate spokesperson. The liaison also provides feedback to the AHIMA board regarding CSA issues and concerns and provides communication to the CSA President, as requested by the AHIMA President or the Board.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve as the liaison for your state association and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at your spring conference in Anchorage.

BULLETIN BOARD

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

CODER

CCS or RHIT with 1 year hospital coding experience. [Central Peninsula Hospital](#), 250 Hospital Place Soldotna Alaska. Contact Human Resources at (907) 714-4773 fax (907) 714-4674. [Email](#).

Coding Technician

[Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation](#), PO Box 130, Dillingham, AK 99576 Call 907.842.5201 ext 6234 fax 907.842.9251. [Email](#) for more information.. Apply [online](#). 11.09.07

Coder/Biller

Valley Medical Care, Juneau: Certified coder with full range of Family Practice inpatient & outpatient coding experience including OB for 12-provider group. Contact Leigh Ann Rose - call 907-586-2434, or write to: 1801 Salmon Creek Lane, Juneau, AK 99801 [Email](#) for more information.10.14.07

Health Information Technician

[Alaska Children's Services, Inc](#), 4600 Abbott Road, Anchorage, AK 99507 907-346-2101 (phone), 907-348-9218 (fax). Apply [online](#). [Email](#)

Manager of Medical Records Services

[Providence Hospital-Kodiak](#), 1915 Rezanof, Kodiak, Alaska 99615. Call (907) 486-3281 for more information. 9.24.07

HIM Director

[Alaska Psychiatric Institute](#), 2800 Providence Drive Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4677 Telephone: (907) 269-7100 Facsimile: (907) 269-7251 Anchorage, Alaska. Must be Alaska Resident. To apply [online](#) or [Email](#) information. 9.14.07

Coder

[Banner Health](#)-Fairbanks Memorial Hospital/Denali Center, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital & Denali Center, 1650 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701. Phone (907) 452-8181. 9.14.07

Coding Reimbursement Specialist (Coder)

[South Pennisula Hospital](#), Homer, Alaska. RHIT, RHIA, or CCS required with 2 year minimum acute care coding experience. Full time position with benefits. Apply [online](#) or call 907.835.0386 or [Email](#).

HS Supervisor, Inpatient Coder, Outpatient Coding Specialist

[Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium](#), 4000 Ambassador Drive · Anchorage, AK 99508. Phone: 907-729-1900. Fax: 729-1901. [Apply online](#) www.anthc.org for more info 907-729-1319 or [Email](#). 07.05.07

Inpatient coder, remote and intermittent Coding Concepts, Inc.

505 W. Northern Lights Blvd. #218, Anchorage, Alaska 99503
877-277-2501 Office Toll Free
907-277-2501 Office

HIM Humor



In order to pay his nursing school tuition, a student was working two jobs over the summer, as a butcher's assistant and as a hospital orderly – both jobs that required the young man wear a long white coat.

One night, he was wheeling a young woman into surgery when she sat up suddenly, looked him in the eye, and screamed, "God save me, it's the butcher!"



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

AKHIMA SPRING CONFERENCE

April 29 – May 2, 2008

FALL 2008 CODING WORKSHOP

November 6 & 7, 2008

AKHIMA Conferences held at:

BP Energy Center

Anchorage, Alaska

AHIMA NATIONAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Seattle, Washington

~ Oct. 11-16, 2008

Grapevine, Texas

~ Oct. 3-8, 2009

Orlando, Florida

~ Sept. 25 – 30, 2010

The AKHIMA Board of Directors wishes each of you a Happy Holiday Season. We look forward to seeing each of you at our annual Spring Business Meeting!

