Health Information Professionals Week 2013

Health Information Professionals Week is a showcase for the thousands of health information management (HIM) professionals who perform their duties masterfully throughout the year. In honor of HIP Week, 2013, ADVANCE for Healthcare Information Professionals is promoting a contest for HIM professionals or students studying HIM to participate in.

In 100 words or less share your thoughts on this question: How have the changes in health information technology helped you to become a better HIM professional?

Submit your answer in the “Post a Comment” section by clicking here. The person with the best response will be announced on 3/22/13 and will receive a HIM T-shirt and a $25 gift certificate to the ADVANCE Healthcare Shop.

Feature Article

Going “Green” with a Hybrid in the World of HIM

By Melody Elwood

Ring...ring...” and it starts. “Health Information, how can I help you?” I hear my coworker say as she answers the phone. I have no time to listen to her conversation as I’m trying to answer three emails- oh wait, make that four emails. Three about how to navigate through our clinic’s EHR system, and one about information from a paper chart that is needed urgently for a medication refill. I get on the phone and try to assist a clinical staff person with the question they emailed me regarding locating something in the EHR, while I simultaneously email another HIM staff member to see if she’s already left for storage as all of our paper charts are kept off site now.

“How do I handle this?” A coworker behind me asks. She has the Billing department on hold. A claim was rejected because our EHR (and the claim we sent out) had the patient listed as a female, but the patient’s insurance had the patient listed as a male. “Looks like an error in the electronic chart, but we should pull the patient’s paper chart just to be sure.” I say.

Two record requests cross my desk next, asking for records we will need to retrieve from both the EHR, and the paper chart. More charts needed from storage, but my coworker has already left to retrieve the upcoming appointment charts, as well as all of the various requests for charts that have poured into our department since she last retrieved charts less than 24 hours ago. “Can somebody call her and see if she can grab that chart for Billing and those two for ROI’s?” I ask as I answer my ringing phone. It’s a provider calling about the email he sent me- my 2nd “how to navigate through our clinic’s EHR” system question. I was going to call him next, I just hand’ had a chance yet. We speak for a while and determine that the information he needs is in a paper chart. He also requests that someone in the HIM department abstract all of the patient’s chronic problems, allergies and past surgical history out of the paper chart and into the EHR.

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Getting Serious About Information Governance

By Sandra K. Kersten, MPH, RHIA and Anne Zender, MA

Information governance is becoming a priority for healthcare organizations. Sutter Health launched a full-scale governance program focusing on immediate business needs related to organizational goals, and working in partnership with appointed operational leaders. They established a policy framework for information management identifying its key domains as: data architecture, security, quality, use, compliance, monitoring, master data management, classification, retention, and archiving. The initiative reflected the realization that consistent policies, standard operating procedures, and a clear monitoring system were needed to ensure the quality and availability of the data, supporting the organization’s needs.

Today’s healthcare organizations invest in information technology (IT) and generate more data than ever before. Stakeholders expect healthcare organizations to use health IT to bring improvements in care and cost-savings to the healthcare system. “What’s needed now is for healthcare organizations to invest in ways to manage, control, and understand all that data. To succeed, they require an information governance strategy,” says Linda Kloss, RHIA, CAE, FAHIMA.

Information governance consists of the accountability framework and decision rights needed to ensure effective and efficient use of information across the enterprise to achieve its goals. Developing an information governance strategy, Kloss said, starts with policy. “We look for a tool to fix the problem, but the problem really is a policy problem. We should be thinking of policy first.”

Once a policy framework is established, we must move forward with current state assessment and implementation of processes and technologies to support information governance goals. However, to adequately define and prioritize the scope and breadth of an information governance program (that is, the policies it must include), it may be necessary to challenge cultural assumptions. For instance, organizations should look beyond the electronic health record (EHR), and consider other data sources.

Defining the organization’s information assets is an important step. In establishing a policy framework, organizations should agree on concepts, definitions, principles, policies, and practice guidelines.

Getting Started

Recommendations on fostering an information governance program:

- Create a vision to drive change. Use a data-dependent business need to raise awareness of the value of your organization’s information assets, such as a breach or reimbursement issue resulting from a management or data integrity issue.
- Convene a steering committee, assign key roles, and engage C-level executive leadership in the steering committee. Other working committees may consist of key operational leaders from the IT, clinical, and business areas.
- Consider all functions of the information life cycle in defining your governance program’s scope: Information design and capture, content and record management, information analysis and use, data integrity/quality, access, security and confidentiality.
- Conduct an assessment to determine the current state of control for all defined areas. Are policies and procedures in place? Are they being followed?
- Develop a time frame shaped by initiatives like meaningful use, ICD-10. Be prepared for a multi-phased approach. The initial phases—establishing an oversight committee, identifying key business operations representatives, defining key policies, and conducting a state assessment—could easily take a year to 18 months to complete.
- Take an incremental approach. Although your program should be comprehensive, identify areas to achieve the greatest impact. Strategy can be formalized.

Your end game is to ensure information assets are well-managed and in control; people and systems achieve maximum benefit from the organization’s information assets; and costs are contained.
I hang up the phone and look up at my computer screen “ERROR # 91 PLEASE CONTACT TECHNICAL SUPPORT.” Great. I write down the abstraction request and the patient’s information on a piece of paper at my desk (since I can’t make a note in the patient’s electronic chart at the moment) and I get to work on fixing the error.

This new hybrid record has catapulted our HIM department into brand new territory and wedged us somewhere in-between clinical and IT staff. We must have strong medical and computer knowledge if we are going to even attempt to make it through our day and get our jobs done. We also must have a strong knowledge of several different paper and electronic chart systems in order to navigate through the maze of locations on our daily scavenger hunt for patient information. We need to have the skills to enter, scan and release this patient information in and out of the EHR accurately and efficiently in way that masks the topsyturvisness going on behind the scenes from our patients and our medical providers. We are in the business of making something very hard look easy.

“Good! My error’s gone!” I triumphantly say to myself. Other departments in our clinic would need to call our IT department to have help with an error like that. There is no time for me to bask in the joy of my tiny victory because my phone is ringing again. It’s the provider I just got off of the phone with. He wants to know why the paper chart isn’t scanned and abstracted yet. Seriously? It’s literally been five minutes! I get the provider off of the phone and call my coworker that went to storage to request the paper chart. She’s already left storage, and is almost back at the clinic, but she agrees to turn around to get me one more chart.

Just then, another HIM coworker of mine bursts into the department. He’s upset. He has just been to the medical floor to pick up some patient records for scanning and abstraction. “You wouldn’t believe it,” he says, “a nurse stopped me and asked what the HIM department even does now that the patient records are all electronic!” I give him a sympathetic smile as he walks back to his desk. I looked at the clock, and it was only 9:30 in the morning. I was starting to feel a little green. This hybrid chart existence is tough!

And the day continues to go on like this; the slightly sick “green” feeling in the pit of my stomach remaining. It’s finally 5:00, and I look around at my fellow “HIMers”. Most of them appear to have been hit by a hybrid (vehicle, that is). Everyone packs up their belongings, says goodbye and goes home. I’m the last to leave, and as I look at our empty department I realize what an exciting time it is to be working as an HIM professional. Implementing an EHR has been so much more complicated than any of us realized it would be, and existing in a hybrid chart world is so hard! But deep down all of us in my HM department know that while we are diving into new territory and figuring out answers to questions that never existed a few years ago, we are actually paving the way for what EHR’s and health information departments will become.

As the years go by, and our careers progress, some of us may be lucky enough to train a fresh new generation of HIM professionals. We will be able to tell them about all of the challenges we went through to get to where they will be starting out. How we had to walk uphill in snow both ways to get to our storage facility that housed our paper charts (ok, that’s a stretch, but we will have earned the right to embellish our journey slightly by then). So I turned off the lights and locked up our HIM department; knowing that every single one of my HIM coworkers would show up the next morning to do it all over again.

“You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help other people get what they want.”

Zig Ziglar
New Videos on COC Standards Now Available

The Commission on Cancer (COC) has launched a new series of 29 free videos, created to assist you in understanding and interpreting the CoC Standards. This series includes an introduction video, two videos describing the Eligibility Requirements, and an additional 26 videos describing select standards. Each video begins with the definition of the standard, describes the requirements for meeting the standard, and concludes with best practice information. These videos can be viewed individually, or shown during staff meetings to assist in clarifying standards requirements. We hope that you and other members of your cancer committee find these videos useful as you work to implement and maintain compliance with the CoC Standards.

Scan the QR code or visit http://goo.gl/WZzFm to access the video series.

References
Links and Resources

HIT/CIM Student Peer Club
Facebook
http://facebook.com/hespc2011
LinkedIn
http://la.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4408348
Blogger
http://sbchcspec.blogspot.com
Google Group
https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups&hl=en#!forum/sbcs-hit-cim-student-peer-club-hespc

Advance for Health Information Professionals
Student & New Grad Center
http://health-information.advanceweb.com/Student-New-Grad-Center/default.aspx

Health 2.0
http://health2con.com

Health Information Careers Pathfinder
http://hicareers.com/pathfinder.swf

HIM Career Map
http://hicareers.com/CareerMap/%20

HIT Pro Exams
http://www.hitproexams.org

Landing That First Job
http://hicareers.com/Toolbox/landingfirstjob.aspx

The American Association of Professional Coders (AAPC)
http://www.aapc.com/
Credentialing Information

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)
http://www.ahima.org
Credentialing Information
http://www.ahima.org/certification/

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI)
http://www.ahdionline.org/
Credentialing Information
http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/creddesig.cfm

The California Health Information Association (CHIA)
http://californiahia.org
CHIA Student Scholarships
http://californiahia.org/chia-student-scholarships
CHIA Membership
http://californiahia.org/join

The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMMS)
http://www.himss.org
Credentialing Information
http://himss.org/asp/CertificationHome.asp

The National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA)
http://www.ncra-usa.org
Credentialing Information
http://www.ctrexam.org/credential/index.htm

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)
http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/community/healthit_hhs.gov__home/1204

The State of California Office of Health Information Integrity
http://www.ohii.ca.gov/calohi/Home.aspx
ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS

By Gagan Bal

The Santa Barbara City College HIT/CIM Student Peer Club (HCSPC) is always seeking highly motivated students who are looking to complement their educational experience and help other students in the process. If you would like to become involved in the development, management, and administration of the HCSPC, you should consider becoming a part of our Club Advisory Committee.

We need enthusiastic and committed HIT/CIM and Medical Coding students to volunteer their time to accomplish club tasks. If you are interested in joining our Advisory Committee and would like to meet and get to know your peers, please contact me at sbcc.hcspc@gmail.com. Please include a short sentence about why you would like to join our team.

DISCUSS ANYTHING FROM ANYWHERE IN OUR HCSPC Google Group

Access Google Groups on your Android™ or Apple® iOS device by pointing your mobile browser to: http://goo.gl/0iKf1 or send the group an email at sbcc-hit-cim-student-peer-club-hcspc@googlegroups.com.

Club description:

To provide an avenue for HIT/CIM students to network and support each other in their academic and career pursuits. Because the HIT/CIM programs are fully online, students have limited opportunities to meet and connect with other students. This club will use web-based technologies to create an online student community of support.

Information about ICD-10 is here!