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Happy New Year!

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season! It is hard to believe we find ourselves in the midst of January and another Minnesota winter. For me personally, the last few months have been quite busy! I returned to the HIM team at Allina Health as a Senior Business Analyst, married my (now) husband Steve, and graduated with my Master’s degree in HIM from the College of St. Scholastica. Needless to say, I am trying to squeeze in some rest and relaxation when I can.

As we begin the 2018 year, the activities are not slowing down! Our monthly coding webinars continue and the Legal Manual Committee is planning a workshop in February focusing on the patient access rule changes. MHIMA will also have representation in Washington D.C. at the AHIMA Advocacy Summit in March. The Annual Meeting and Marketing & Communication committees continue working diligently to plan our annual conference at the Minneapolis Marriot Northwest in April. I promise this is an event you will not want to miss!! Information regarding registration will be coming out soon. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me and I will get you connected to the appropriate committee or project chair(s).

All of the regional meetings this past fall were well attended and featured some great speakers and content. Thank you to our regional board members and volunteers for putting on these successful events! While in attendance, the Delegate Directors received questions regarding HIM Reimagined (HIMR) and the future of the HIM profession. In response, the Board has asked Ryan Sandefer, Co-chair of the HIMR Taskforce, to answer some of these questions. His responses are found within this newsletter. Also, if you were unable to attend one of the recent HIMR webinars, the recordings are still available on demand through the AHIMA website.

The Nominating Committee is currently seeking names of members to fill open positions for the 2018-2019 Board of Directors, as well as for our 2018 Distinguished Member, Rising Star Professional, and Outstanding Student. Details on the eligibility criteria for all positions and awards can be found in this newsletter as well as on the MHIMA website. Please contact Past President Kristi Lundgren no later than February 2nd if you want to recommend someone for consideration!

In closing, I would like to extend my thanks to all of you for your dedication to our association! We had a wonderful 2017 and I am so excited to see what 2018 brings! As always, feel free to email me if you have any questions or comments at president@mnhima.org.

Christina M. (Wallner) Snaza, MS, RHIA
The MHIMA Nominating Committee is seeking nominations and volunteers interested in having their names placed on the ballot for our **MHIMA 2018 election**.

**Positions open are:**

- President-Elect (3-year term)
- Delegate Directors – 1 member (2-year term)
- Secretary (1-year term)
- Audit Committee – 2 members (2-year term)

**Eligibility:**

- All Board-elected nominees must be active AHIMA/MHIMA members. Credentialing requirements are listed below:
  a. President Elect, Delegate Director(s), must have an AHIMA-approved credential.
  b. Treasurer, Secretary, Audit Committee Members do not require an AHIMA-approved credential.
- Additionally, nominees for the offices of President-Elect and Delegate Director must have either: held another BOD-elected position, have served as a MHIMA committee chair, have been a regional officer or served actively in an AHIMA-volunteer role within the last three years.

**The election occurs in March and the elected positions take office on July 1, 2018.** If you have questions about volunteering, are interested in volunteering, or want to recommend someone for consideration, please contact Kristi Lundgren at kmlundgren430@gmail.com **no later than February 2, 2018.**
The MHIMA Nominating Committee, chaired by Kristi Lundgren, Past President, is seeking your recommendations for individuals deserving of being recognized within the categories of our recognition program. Nomination is a way to recognize excellence at every level within our association, and we welcome all eligible nominations.

The Achievement Award categories are as follows:

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBER:**
- Has been an active member of MHIMA for 5 years or more
- Is currently a MHIMA member
- Has made and outstanding contribution to the HIM profession in one or more of the following areas:
  - Volunteer service to the HIM association
  - Outstanding achievement in professional practice
  - Dedication to education
  - Contributions in research or published materials

**RISING STAR PROFESSIONAL:**
- Is currently an active member of MHIMA
- Is employed in an HIM-related field
- Has earned and maintained at least one AHIMA approved credential
- Has been employed for 5 years or less from the date of credential award
- Has demonstrated progressive leadership in their career and commitment to the future of the HIM profession through participation in HIM related activities or volunteer work

**OUTSTANDING STUDENT:**
- Is a student member of MHIMA
- Is currently enrolled and beyond the first 3 quarters/semesters in a CAHIIM accredited program or an AHIMA approved coding program
- Has a grade point equivalent of 3.5 or higher out of 4.0
- Has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the future of the HIM profession through participation in HIM-related activities within their academic environment or volunteer work

Our Rising Star Professional and Outstanding Student will be recognized during our annual business meeting and our Distinguished Member at a luncheon/presentation.

Please send any questions about eligibility and names/information of nominees no later than Monday, February 26, 2018 (firm) to Kristi Lundgren with a copy to the Executive Director.
MHIMA is pleased to once again remind our eligible students of our 2018 MHIMA Scholarship. This scholarship is based on merit and not on financial need.

**Eligibility to apply (ALL of the following requirements MUST be met):**

- AHIMA member with Minnesota designated as their component state association
- Enrolled in an in-state or out-of-state CAHIIM accredited HIM program (unless doctoral)
- Applicants must have completed 50% of the total required program credits from one of the following programs:
  - Health Information Management associate degree
  - Health Information Management baccalaureate degree
  - Health Information Management master’s degree
  - Doctoral program related to HIM in a college or university nationally accredited (does not need to be CAHIIM accredited to qualify)
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0)

**The application process includes:**

- Complete and submit the MHIMA Scholarship application document
- Submit a letter of recommendation from a faculty advisor, faculty member or mentor
- Submit verification from your Program Director that you have completed 50% of required credits for program and are expected to graduate
- Submit a written essay of between 300-700 words under the title: “How I Will Use This Degree to Advance the HIM Profession”
- Submit an official school grade transcript that indicates your cumulative GPA
- Link to all scholarship application documents on MHIMA Scholarship website page

Program Directors from all of our Minnesota HIT/HIM programs have received information about our Scholarship program as well.

The exact amounts of the scholarship awards depends on yearly contributions to our MHIMA Scholarship Fund; however, past awards have been between $500 and $1500.

Scholarship winners will be announced in April 2018, and the scholarships will be recognized at our MHIMA Annual Meeting on April 26, 2018 at Minneapolis Marriott Northwest in Brooklyn Park, MN. The person being awarded the scholarship will be eligible to attend our Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 26, 2018, at no cost. (MHIMA will not reimburse for any associated expenses to attend the meeting, such as hotel, meals or travel). The actual scholarship checks will be forwarded to the winners from the AHIMA Foundation, which holds our MHIMA Student Merit Scholarship Fund dollars.

Winning essays will be published in the summer issue of MHIMA’s electronic newsletter, MHIMA Connection.
2018 MHIMA
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

ALL application materials MUST be COMPLETE and received on or before March 2nd, 2018. Applications that do not meet requirements and or received after March 2nd, 2018 will be returned to the applicant.

If you are eligible to apply for a scholarship, we encourage you to consider this opportunity.

Best regards, Brandi Bierbrauer, RHIA, CPhT
2018 MHIMA Scholarship Program Chairperson
We are excited to announce the 2018 Annual Meeting & Exhibit being held April 25-27, 2018! This year’s theme is “HIM: Waves of Change. Oceans of Opportunity”.

The Annual Meeting Committee has been working hard to put together what they hope will be a fabulous educational and networking meeting. This year’s meeting will align with AHIMA’s 2018-2022 Strategic Objectives: Prepare HIM Professionals For The Future, Champion Information Governance (IG), Lead In Informatics, and Lead In Data Analytics. The committee is in the process of finalizing the rest of the speakers for keynotes and tracks on coding, clinical documentation improvement, IG, data analytics, informatics, leadership, etc. They are also planning networking opportunities including some top notch fun entertainment. A complete schedule of events will be available on the MHIMA website later this month. A total of 15 CEUs can be earned for the 3 days of participation at this year’s value-added annual meeting.

The venue is the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest, Brooklyn Park, MN (formally the Northland Inn) located approximately 15 miles north west of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area.

We encourage you to start your plans for attending and look forward to seeing you there!!

Gina Sanvik and Heather Feltus
MHIMA Annual Meeting Co-chairs
Credential Earned: RHIT

What materials did you use to prepare? How long did you study prior to taking the exam?
I used RHIT Exam Preparation, Seventh Edition to help me prepare for my exam. This was a textbook that I had to purchase as a student during my last semester of the HIT course. We used it for the Comprehensive Review course and I continued to use it throughout the summer until I took my exam. The textbook included online practice exams that were super helpful as well. I would say I spent about 10 months preparing for the exam.

How did your current or previous positions help you prepare for the exam?
My current position helped me prepare for the exam because I was putting the information to use on a daily basis. It kept some of the information fresh in my mind and because of that, I knew the areas that I had to study more than others.

How do you feel obtaining this credential has helped you in your current position or will help you in the future?
I think this credential will help me in the future to get into a higher role than a receptionist because I have an overall understanding of so many areas in the office aspect. I could go into the legal part of it, coding, or possible even some sort of management role.

What would you say to MHIMA members who are considering obtaining their RHIT?
I think in the long run, obtaining the RHIT will have been worth it. It might be expensive to take, but should pay off in the long run because it will offer job opportunities not that everyone can do unless you have the RHIT certification.

Any other comments about preparing for or taking this exam?
Make sure to study, study, study. Personally, I can’t stress that enough. The book I had to prepare really helped me. I loved the online practice exams; it scored you by domain and if you have to work on some areas more that others, you can just practice those domains.

Interested in taking your RHIA/RHIT exam? Wondering if NOW is the right time? Check out this important video from AHIMA.org! http://journal.ahima.org/2018/01/01/video-the-importance-of-certification-exams/
"The Legal Manual Committee has been hard at work editing chapters to ensure the most up to date and relevant information makes its way to our members. Chapter 5 regarding Release of Information and the new legislation regarding Patient Access will be published in January. For more information on this topic, make sure to attend our Webinar on February 27th from 12-1pm. Sue Nathe (legal manual KFA) will be presenting on the complexity of this enactment and how it affects every healthcare provider in Minnesota. Watch for more details being released soon. The committee wishes you a safe and happy 2018!"
This fall, members of the Minnesota Health Information Management Association’s Board of Directors provided a presentation to update all its regional associations on various topics. One of those topics was Health Information Management Reimagined (HIMR). This presentation resulted in quite a few questions from members, so I’m taking the opportunity to write this article in an effort to answer them.

For those of who are not familiar with HIMR, it is the Strategic Plan of AHIMA’s Council for Excellence in Education (CEE). Every ten years AHIMA’s Educational Board develops a strategic plan, just as the AHIMA Board does for the broader strategy for the national association. HIMR consists of four major goals with associated tactics:

1. Increase the number of AHIMA members who hold relevant graduate degrees, (e.g., HIM, Health Informatics, MBA, MD, MEd, MPH) to 20 percent of total membership within 10 years.
2. In collaboration with other health and health-related organizations, in the public and private sectors, build a mechanism to ensure availability of research that supports health informatics and information management.
3. Increase the opportunities for specialization across all levels of the HIM academic spectrum through curricula revision, while retaining a broad foundation in health information management and analytics.
4. RHIA credential is recognized as the standard for HIM generalist practice and the RHIT (+Specialty) as the technical level of practice.

You can read the entire white paper and obtain additional resources related to this strategic plan on the HIMR website: http://www.ahima.org/about/him-reimagined.

As with every change, this plan has resulted in many questions about the future of the profession and the potential impact (positive and negative) on educational programs. Here are those that were submitted this fall by MHIMA members.

The rural areas often do not have employees who specialize in just one area of health information. Is this eliminating the RHIT credential as an entry-level generalist?

Rural health challenges are similar to those of more populated areas. The goal of this strategy is to develop curriculum that provides education related to the current domains associated with the associate degree curriculum and the RHIT examination, thus providing general content. However, academic programs will have the opportunity to provide more specialized content in a format most fitting to their needs. The HIMR team is confident that associate level education will address the needs of healthcare providers across the delivery spectrum. The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) website details the challenges of rural healthcare organizations. NRHA’s website reports that there are currently 700 rural hospitals facing closure and many others being bought out or merged with larger healthcare organizations.

When buy outs or mergers occur, the systems and processes in place at the purchasing organizations frequently make their way to the rural organizations as well. The changes predicted in HIMR are inclusive of rural organizations. Being prepared for those anticipated changes early provides us with an opportunity to focus on the opportunities instead of waiting until it is too late to
Why does AHIMA keep allowing individuals to sit for the RHIA exam who do not possess a bachelor’s degree in HIM?

One of the overarching goals of HIMR is to advance the educational level of HIM professionals based upon the fact that healthcare is becoming more complex and that healthcare organizations are requiring higher levels of education within emerging HIM areas. HIMR does include a recommendation for individuals who hold a baccalaureate degree or higher who also hold a RHIT credential, a window of opportunity to attain the RHIA credential. A similar previous initiative, in 1999-2004, was instrumental in positioning HIM professionals with advanced degrees for recognition of their HIM knowledge and higher level education. According to the HIMR Whitepaper, Advanced degrees are more commonly held by RHIA than any other credential—44 percent of AHIMA’s advanced degree holders hold a RHIA, followed by CCS (21 percent), and RHIT (11 percent). At present, 11.7 percent of the total AHIMA membership hold master’s level degrees or higher.

Statistics regarding the current proviso as recommended by the HIMR were presented at the House of Delegates meeting at the AHIMA National Convention in Los Angeles. According to the presentation,

- 110 RHIA exam applications submitted under the proviso rule
- 18 out of 110 have taken the RHIA exam and all have passed. The remainder are scheduled to take the exam
- To be eligible:
  1. Must have RHIT (before August 31, 2018)
  2. Must have Baccalaureate or Graduate degree (any kind) - date by which this is obtained does not matter as long as it is before the exam window closes
  3. Proviso opportunity closes on 12/31/2021

Will more specialty credentials water down the importance of an education?

No. The HIMR Taskforce, AHIMA’s Council for Excellence in Education, and the AHIMA Boards of Directors support this strategy. The HIMR Taskforce has approached this change and support the specialization due to a clear and demonstrated misperception of HIM skills and abilities amongst those hiring HIM professionals. Specialty credentials based upon academic requirements provide the HIM profession an opportunity to demonstrate the diverse content knowledge and skills of professionals through new credentials.

Will I lose my RHIT credential if I do not specialize?

No. Those who have earned the RHIT credential have earned it and will be able to retain it indefinitely.

How can you specialize if you don’t have the basic foundation/knowledge upon to build?

The specialties will have core content that is foundational to HIM practice and will cut across all specializations as well as specialty content related to each specialization. Specialization will allow academic programs to advance specific subject matter expertise for their students. In its current form, HIM educational curricula includes 6 domains, 32 subdomains, and nearly 100 competencies,
most of which are at a very high taxonomy. The HIMR taskforce believes that the rate by which the CEE has been creating curricular competencies to adapt to ever-changing practice is not sustainable.

**When will the specialization tracks be finalized?**
Specialty competencies will be released for comment between the second and third quarters of 2018. The goal is for the final competencies to be released in Q4 of 2018.

**How are the RHIT schools in the area going to be able to provide these specialty tracks?**
RHIT programs in the area will be required to transition to new competencies in much the same way as they current transition to new competencies and accreditation standards. There will be a long transition period that will entail CCHIIM (certification) adopting and implementing new credentials, CAHIIM (accreditation) revising standards, and programs implementing new competencies through revised curricula. Specialty credentials would likely be offered in 2025.

Thanks to everyone who submitted a question. I will say that the process in which the goals and tactics has been thoughtful and deliberate. The Task Force has worked on this plan for nearly two years, and has worked diligently to be transparent. We have held multiple presentations, webinars, breakout sessions, and information sessions. It has been a unique opportunity to co-chair this work that is truly meant to be transformational and position the HIM profession for the new challenges facing how health information is collected, maintained, and used in an increasingly complex healthcare environment. I’m looking forward to working with you all as we move forward to best prepare our current and potential professionals to address these challenges.

Happy New Year everyone! I wish you all the best in 2018.

**Ryan Sandefer, PhD**
Assistant Professor and Department Chair
Department of Health Informatics and Information Management
The College of St. Scholastica

Health Information Management Reimagined Task Force
Co-Chair
DON’T LET TECHNOLOGY
OVERSHADOW ETIQUETTE
AND MANNERS

By: Carolyn Gaarder, RHIA

Is it possible for technology to completely dictate our lives? Do you remember life before all the electronic devices? Have you forgotten how to communicate in person? Have you narrowly escaped being run over by a shopper moving full speed with a shopping cart while focusing down and concentrating on a cell phone conversation? Look out world. Etiquette and manners should not be forgotten.

No matter how advanced your technology skills are, good manners and etiquette will still have you coming out to shine and will never be replaced.

Think about your phone contacts. Always answer with a pleasant tone. Remember, to speak clearly in this world of speaker phones and teleconferencing. Fully identify yourself and your department if appropriate. If you are leaving a voice-mail, your name and number should be repeated again at the end of the message.

The age of trying to multitask is dead. For example, trying to carry on a conversation and checking email at the same time is no longer considered time saving activities. It has been found that multitasking leads to confusion and embarrassing mistakes. Listen and give your full attention to the person at hand.

Email Etiquette: Remember to think first. Who are you composing your message for? Arrange your message in the descending order of importance. In other words, give the conclusion first with supporting details to follow, if necessary. Add a meaningful subject line. It will add to the chances that your message will be read. Use professional language, proper punctuation, and capital letters. Don’t use all caps. Remember, your mother reminded you to say please and thank you. That advice is not out of style.

Cell phones are great. What did we do without them? They should not control our lives. It can be irritating to hear numerous cell phones ringing during meetings or social functions. It is much better to place cell phones on vibrate. Excuse yourself and leave the room if you must take a call.

Technology provides us with great tools. We just have to remember to think of people first.
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For additional details and registration links, please visit the MHIMA website at: [http://www.mnhima.org/calendar/calendar.html](http://www.mnhima.org/calendar/calendar.html)

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<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 26th, 2018</td>
<td>MHIMA Board Meeting</td>
<td>This meeting will be held via WEBEX only.</td>
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<td>10:00AM - 1:00PM</td>
<td>Conference Call (WEBEX)</td>
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<td>February 14th, 2018</td>
<td>MHIMA Coding Webinar - Inpatient E/M Coding</td>
<td>The Ins (And Outs) of Complex E/M Coding, presented by Katie O'Hearn and</td>
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<td>12:00PM - 1:00PM</td>
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<td>Melissa Cartier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14th, 2018</td>
<td>MHIMA Coding Webinar - Surgery Split Bills</td>
<td>Presented by Katie O'Hearn and Melissa Cartier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00PM - 1:00PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 16th, 2018</td>
<td>MHIMA Board Meeting</td>
<td>The MHIMA Board Meeting will be held at the Allina Commons, room 862. It</td>
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<td>10:00AM - 1:00PM</td>
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<td>will also be available via WEBEX.</td>
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Thank you for your article submissions!

We would like to give our great appreciation for everyone who helped with this newsletter. Special thanks to those who submitted content: Christina Snaza, Kristi Lundgren, Brandi Bierbrauer, Ryan Sandefer, Nicole Schaefer, Carolyn Gaarder, Mollie Niznik, Gina Sanvik and Heather Feltus.

Do you have an article you would like to submit for the next newsletter, or a topic you’d like to see featured? Please e-mail us at marketing-communications@mnhima.org - we would love to hear from you!

The MHIMA Board of Directors would like to extend a special thank you to Anita Schmidt as she transitions out of her role as our Coding Roundtable Coordinator and ‘passes the torch’ to Amber Michelizzi and Vickie Sather! We appreciate your time and dedication to this volunteer position, Anita!

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Follow us on Facebook (MN Health Information Management) and Twitter (@MNHIMA) to receive information and keep up with current events!

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