



MHIMA Uplink

Summer 2009

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Uplink's "New" Look

Welcome to the MHIMA's E-Newsletter, Uplink. We have a new look to Uplink, associated with our website upgrade. Our newsletter reaches more than 1700 MHIMA members, as well as those who visit our website. Our goal is to keep you informed on the issues affecting our HIM profession, and updating you on the latest happenings within MHIMA on a quarterly basis. Please let us know what you think of our "new look". And remember, you can earn two (2) CE credits by submitting an article relating to an aspect of HIM that is appropriate for a broad audience. We'd love to hear from you!

AHIMA ELECTRONIC BALLOT IS OPEN FOR VOTING

All active members of MHIMA are encouraged and urged to VOTE in the AHIMA election. The electronic ballot closes at 5 pm CDT on June 26th. MHIMA reminds you that our very own **Carolyn Gaarder** is on the ballot for Commission on Certification - HIT Educator.

AHIMA's theme this year is "I VOTE." You can find the voting link when you log onto the CoP. There's also a box to "VOTE" on the left side of your personal page.

Minnesota: Let's lead the nation in our voting response! Go to [AHIMA's website](#) today and VOTE!

2009 MHIMA Scholarship Winners

The MHIMA Scholarship

Contact [MHIMA's Executive Director](#).

President's Message

June 18, 2009

Diane Larson, MA, RHIA, CHPS



Hello everyone,

This is my final President's message. Thank you for allowing me to serve in this position for the past year. It was definitely a career highlight! I felt blessed having Lisa Kampa precede me as president and willing to mentor me as the year progressed and Stephanie Luthi-Terry, President-Elect, available (24/7) to provide wise counsel. The MHIMA Board worked tirelessly producing a phenomenal list of accomplishments. The accomplishments and project leads are as follows:

- Successful 2009 MHIMA annual meeting – Megan O'Neill and Angela Trucano
- Newly revised Legal Reference Manual – Heidi Onsted and Stephanie Luthi-Terry
- 2009 AHIMA Coding Excellence Seminar coming to Minnesota in August – Gina Sanvik, Maxine Weiss and Brenda Wood
- New MHIMA brochure and website upgrade – Laura Blabac and Ranelle Bauer
- Continued myPHR Promotion – Madonna LeBlanc
- Resurrection of coding roundtables and strengthening of AAPC alliance – Carla Tobin and Mary Jean Talaska
- Leading opposition to the Copy Fee Bill, SF 857, Cathy French and Elaine Yaggie
- Scholarship funding re-design – Kari Sattre and Tracey Kapsner
- Revenue cycle management education – Colleen Malmgren
- Critical access facility education – Sarah Spoon and Sue Jensen
- All this and a budget remaining in-the-black - Stacy Carlson and Patti Collins Smith

I would be remiss without also thanking the many, many MHIMA volunteers who worked with these project leaders throughout this past year. Minnesota is blessed to have so many of you who are willing to volunteer your time for the benefit of your peers and our professional association. Thank you, everyone!

MHIMA's greatest accomplishment this year was contracting with Myrna Wells-Ulland to serve in the role of MHIMA Executive Director. I am very grateful that Myrna was willing to leave the comforts of retirement to work for MHIMA and I hope she will continue to serve as the "face" of MHIMA for some time to come.

With considerable optimism about MHIMA and its continually developing value for our more than

Selection Committee announced six winners of 2009 MHIMA scholarships at the MHIMA annual business meeting at Grand Casino, Hinckley, on May 7, 2009.

Winners from The College of St. Scholastica's HIIM programs:

KAREN TEUFER, RHIT, CCA, Cottage Grove, MN \$1000, RHIA program
SUSAN JOHNSON, RHIA, Duluth, MN: \$1500, Master's program
BRANDI FOWLER, RHIA, CPC, El Reno, OK: \$1500, Master's program
VALERIE McCLEARY, RHIA, Largo, FL: \$750, Master's program
SHARON POWELL, RHIA, Eads, TN: \$750, Master's program

Winner from The College of St. Catherine's Health Information Specialist program:

BRIDGET APPLEBY, Deephaven, MN: \$500

Congratulations to these deserving students. Look for their individual essays elsewhere in this issue of Uplink. The 2009 Scholarship Committee was chaired by Angela Jackson. Committee members included Gina Sanvik, Colleen Malmgren, Steph Luthi-Terry, and Danika Brinda.

NEMHIMA

1700 members, I humbly pass the MHIMA President's gavel to Stephanie Luthi-Terry.

Yours sincerely,

Diane Larson, MA, RHIA, CHPS
MHIMA (soon to be) Past President

2009 SCHOLARSHIP WINNING ESSAY - Teufer

"Why I chose HIM and my vision for how my skills/interests could contribute to the profession"

Karen Teufer, RHIT, CCA, Cottage Grove, MN

I'm currently enrolled in the RHIA progression program at St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN. My career in health information started in 1997 as an ER Admitting Specialist registering patients. As I learned about admitting and how the ER ran, I began to develop an interest in Health Information. This position opened my eyes to the field and taught me what medical information was, what went into the medical record, and how healthcare professionals collect information. After this position, I worked in a variety of different jobs from receptionists, medical records clerk, managed care, admitting coordinator, and currently coder. I learned a wide variety of jobs and gained more information within the health information field. I began to research on how to obtain a health information degree and found the RHIT program at Rasmussen College. I soon combined my passion of learning with the ambition to progress in HIM. I graduated from Rasmussen in June of 2007 with my RHIT and immediately started at St. Scholastica. At St. Scholastica, I was able to dig deeper into the HIM field and began to further shape my skills and knowledge. I am graduating from St. Scholastica in December of 2009 and my road to this point has been nothing short of a challenge. I have had to juggle a full time job, a family of five and school work, all the while maintaining my 3.7 GPA. To further explore this field, I began an internship with AHIMA in June 2008, working on the SLHIE (State Level Health Information Exchange) project with Don Mon and Harry Rhodes. As a result of my internship, I have learned a tremendous amount about RHIOs, HIE, and topics such as authentication, authorization, consent, and laws regarding these areas in other states. I learned what it takes to put a project like this together and learned techniques in research and writing. This experience has given me a different view of health information - one that will definitely help me in the field. The skills and knowledge that I have learned from past jobs, from interning at AHIMA, and attending St. Scholastica will provide a strong foundation for me to do great things in the HIM field. I would like to continue my education with a Master's degree in Health Care Law. While interning with AHIMA on their SLHIE project, I discovered that there are many things that are not cut and dry and may have different interpretations. With RHIOs and Health Information Exchanges approaching on the horizon, I would love to help others with understanding state and national laws that will affect this progression. I am bound and determined to make a difference in this field and I am dedicated and committed to bringing this field into the future, all the while maintaining integrity, security and accuracy in hopes to contribute to a better and more efficient health care system overall.

2009-2011 Election Results

NEMHIMA (Region B)
recently held elections for
officers for 2009-2011.
Congratulations to the
following:

President: Amy Watters,
MA, RHIA
Vice-President/Treasurer:
Janelle Wapola, RHIA
Secretary: Kerri Mesia,
RHIA

They will begin their new
term of office July 1, 2009
and serve through June 30,
2011.

Thank you.
Sue Powell, RHIA
Chair, Nominating Committee
NEMHIMA (Region B)

SEMNHIMA Election Results

SEMNHIMA (Region F -
Southeast/Rochester Area)
recently held their elections.

President: John Marshall,
RHIA
Past President: Sarah Urtel,
RHIA
President-Elect: Katie
Massen
Secretary: Catherine French
Treasurer: Vicki Chelf

They will assume their
leadership roles on June 1,
2009.

2009 SCHOLARSHIP WINNING ESSAY - Johnson

"How I will use this degree to advance the HIM profession"

Susan Johnson, RHIA, Duluth MN

Knowing that obtaining a master's degree would be a challenge, completing one has always been in the back of my mind. However, I wasn't sure what type of degree I would pursue or when I would do it. Upon entering the workforce and becoming part of the team implementing an admitting, medical records, and abstracting system I quickly found that project management skills were needed for my job. My next large task was to be the project manager for a reinstall of a comparative database system. The master's program at St. Scholastic's Health Information Management Program offered a certificate in project management so I enrolled. I have been able to apply the skills I learned in those classes to scanning, transcription, and EHR implementation projects.

One of my career goals is to improve the usability of EHR systems. I find enjoyment and satisfaction in the improvements that we are making with the EHR in the place where I work. EHR implementation is a slow and challenging process, and the master's program has provided the opportunity and structure to perform in-depth study into areas that otherwise I would not have pursued. I want to continue to be involved with EHR implementation projects and to use the skills and concepts I have learned in the program.

As my facility has implemented the EHR and moved to a hybrid legal record, we have realized the need for defining our legal health record. My final applied project for the master's program involved developing flowcharts, tables, policies, and procedures for defining the legal health record and designated record set for my place of employment. Pursuing the master's degree allowed me to devote time to researching, discussing the topic with classmates, and enlisting guidance from professionals in the field that otherwise I would not have had the opportunity to do. The knowledge I have gained throughout this process will be shared during a presentation at a state Health Information Management meeting. The field of HIM provides many exciting challenges and opportunities and using the knowledge and skills learned in the master's program prepares me to meet those challenges.

2009 Scholarship Winning Essay - Fowler

"How I will use this degree to advance the HIM profession"

Brandi L. Fowler, RHIA, CPC, El Reno OK

In 2007 I listened to several HIM professionals speak about furthering our education and the concern that many long time educators would be retiring soon. I decided at that moment that since I planned to stay in the educational area for many years to come, I needed to pursue my Master's and Doctoral degrees. I plan to use these degrees in many ways. I am a young educator in the Midwest, with a passion to instill the importance of graduate education into my undergraduate students. There is currently no graduate Health Information/Informatics program in the Midwest, which is why my final applied project encompasses development of a HIIM graduate program in the Midwest.

2009 AHIMA's Achieving Coding Excellence coming to Minnesota in August

MHIMA is co-sponsoring "Achieving Coding Excellence" on August 20-21, 2009, at the Marriott Minneapolis Airport in Bloomington. Learn the latest on coding and reimbursement issues with sessions covering coding guidelines, diagnostic and procedural coding. Regulatory and industry changes are also addressed, with best integration practices. Learn effective techniques on the transition to ICD-10. Identify gaps in coding knowledge of anatomy and physiology needed to effectively transition to ICD-10-PCS. 12 CEUs available.

Go to [AHIMA's Events](#) before July 23rd for more information, to view the Agenda, and early registration details.

2009 Scholarship Fundraising at Annual Meeting

In addition to planting and nurturing the seed of continued education in all of my 300+ allied health students, I am a health information professional at heart. Our healthcare system is rapidly changing with the federal level emphasis on health information technology. Our profession must produce more professionals with the health information and informatics knowledge base.

It has been a goal of mine to offer our annual allied health graduates a healthcare graduate program option. We average nearly 1,000 graduates annually. The Dean of our school has encouraged my continued progression of the development of a health informatics graduate degree offering at our college. Our Dean is supportive of this effort as a positive addition to our current graduate program offerings.

Attending courses at St. Scholastica has allowed me the opportunity to teach health information and informatics concepts to a broad range of future health professionals and has been a tremendous experience. After taking my first courses with the College of St. Scholastica in January 2008 I realized I was taking much, if not all, of my CSS coursework knowledge and information directly back into the classroom to my students. By teaching my students some of the up and coming items with EHR, Data Administration, IT Ethics, and Classification and Terminology coupled with their core HIM and allied health lessons, I am confident our students are more well versed in the future of our healthcare system.

Completing my master's degree will allow me to move the HIM profession forward by offering the opportunity of our vast profession to students in the Midwest. I have finally discovered what I believe I am meant to do for the rest of my life. I have found my true calling, education, I love it! I plan to teach for many decades to come.

What I appreciate most about contributing to the field of health information management is what I have learned from those that have come before me. I compare myself to a sponge. trying to soak up as much information and knowledge as I can. I want to be able to pass that information to future generations verbally as well as through a textbook.

I appreciate your consideration for this wonderful scholarship opportunity.

2009 Scholarship Winning Essay - McCleary

"How I will use this degree to advance the HIM profession"

Valerie McCleary, RHIA, Largo FL

Pursuing a master's degree has been a long desired personal goal. I have lived a unique life as an only child of deaf-mutes. Beginning school for the first time without any advance preparation opened up a completely new world. I guess you could say I hit the ground running and never looked back. Each degree I have pursued has given me a sense of achievement, new skill sets and confidence in applying what I have learned to my job.

HIM has always been my career path of choice since I graduated at age 19 with my AAS degree in HIT. The last decade has been a time of recognition of HIM as a profession through HIPAA and a time

Thank you to everyone who supported our "Not-So-Silent" Auction and our Scholarship Elite Gift drawing fundraising at our 2009 Annual Meeting at the Grand Casino in Hinckley. Between these two events, more than \$5900 was raised to benefit our Scholarship Fund. Kudos to the leaders of these two events: Janelle Wapola and Joy Schmitt (Silent Auction) and Kari Sattre and Tracey Kapsner (Scholarship Gift Drawing). And thanks to all of the individual members and vendors who so generously gifted items for these two events. Our students appreciate your generosity!

2009 Legal Resource Manual

Did you know that an entirely new 2009 Legal Resource Manual is now available on CD? This manual continues to serve as the comprehensive resource for HIM professionals across all health care organizations in Minnesota. The 2009 manual includes information you need regarding Consents and Release of Information, as well as

- A new chapter on Hospice
- POLST (physician ordeed life sustaining treatment)
- Retention requirement for paper records
- Updated information on identity theft and red flag

of transformation through HIE. It just gets better and better.

AHIMA published a white paper "Vision 2016: Blueprint for Quality Education in HIM." The deployment of EHRs, PHRs and HIE obviously necessitates a higher level of training and technology. This paper predicts that due to rapid changes in health care, HIM will become a graduate level profession by 2016 requiring a qualified pool of educators. I am teaching health informatics as an online adjunct professor at the local college. My class is entitled "Electronic Health/Medical Record Systems." I am fulfilling the vision by advancing my education and educating others simultaneously! I would like to continue being an HIM educator, but have not closed the door to returning to Public Health or the private sector when I complete my degree.

The master's course work has been a tremendous opportunity to learn about information technology. I especially find it very exciting to learn about IT applications to HIM processes. I am now beginning to achieve the dual expertise of IT/HIM needed to advance HIM. I want to use this degree to enhance electronic conversion of HIM systems. Nothing would please me more to see the file rooms and physician's incomplete chart workrooms across America disappear! Implementing efficient computer systems will truly assist in our current times of economic struggles, budget cuts and decreased reimbursements.

I want to be present in the room when the executives deliberate over the vendor choices in electronic record systems to guide them with expert advice. I want to use my degree to make a difference in the health and lives of others, reducing medical errors and enhancing effective treatment options. I will enhance the profession and the next generation by enabling and mentoring others.

HIE is no longer a dream, but a dream coming true. I want to be on the cutting edge of the latest and greatest revolutionary changes in HIM armed with the education and experience to play a significant role in accomplishing the President's mandate of an electronic health record by 2010. America is currently behind on technological advances in health care. We need to enable America to become a land of healthier people with efficient and affordable healthcare systems in place. I want to help achieve that goal!

2009 Scholarship Winning Essay - Powell

"How I will use this degree to advance the HIM profession"

Sharon (Sherry) Powell, RHIA, Eads TN

The Master's program in Health Information Management at the College of St. Scholastica is a very well rounded program. There are required courses but students are also allowed the opportunity to choose electives from four concentrations depending upon one's interest. I have a special interest in security and privacy and look forward to sitting for the CHPS exam in the near future. My plans also include pursuing another degree either in Information Technology or an MBA. I would love to teach part time at the undergraduate level in an HIM program if the opportunity affords itself. I also look forward to volunteering my services at the state and local level for HIM programs and workshops where my experiences and acquired knowledge would benefit others. At my current place of employment, we are transitioning from a paper record to an electronic record and I want to share my

rules

- Disaster planning preparedness
- Potential HIPAA implications as a result of the 2009 federal stimulus package

The manual has imbedded hyperlinks within the chapters that allow you to "jump to" a web resource and then come back to the original resource page. You can load the CD onto your home or office PC and it will become a daily resource and time saver.

MHIMA thanks iod incorporated for burning the CDs.

To obtain your manual, go to our [secure on-line order function](#)

Student Corner

The MHIMA Board of Directors thanks our two student representatives to the Board for 2008-2009: Claire Flanagan and Amanda Quesenberry, senior students from The College of St. Scholastica. Claire and Amanda attended Board meetings during this past year, learning how the MHIMA Board and its key volunteers functioned. Congratulations to both of them who recently graduated and have entered the work force!

The MHIMA Board welcomes

experiences with others by contributing articles to the American Health Information Management Association Journal.

I am a strong proponent for my profession and take every opportunity to encourage others to consider this field. I currently have an employee who is enrolled in an on-line undergraduate program for Health Information Management.

2009 Scholarship Winning Essay - Appleby

"Why I chose HIM and my vision for how my skills/interests could contribute to the profession"

Bridget Appleby, Deephaven MN

I have chosen to pursue a career in HIM for several reasons. I have always been interested in the field of Health/Medicine. My first work experience during college began with a part-time job as a Phlebotomist and then later as a full-time Pharmacy Technician at Kettering Medical Center and Loma Linda University Medical Center. Various events happened in my life which then directed my career path towards sales. My desire to return to college with a focus in the Health field has been realized by enrolling in the HIM Program at the College of St. Catherine. I was also encouraged by several surgeons to look at this viable career in today's changing healthcare environment.

Everyone has an opportunity in their life to take a leadership role. My life has provided me with leadership roles while working and volunteering my time; therefore, I also look forward to using those skills in the HIM profession. I am enthusiastic about this profession because I will be a valuable asset to my future employer.

While watching President Obama's speech in January, he mentioned the Electronic Health Record (EHR). This was an opportunity to share with my two daughters the fact that I will be a part of the exciting, new changes that will begin to be implemented during his administration. Our nation is going to begin to see a dramatic shift in the current health care model. I believe the Health Information Management field will experience exponential growth due to the proposed changes in nationwide health care and there will be expanded job titles in the future that currently do not exist.

I can envision myself working within a local healthcare community to facilitate public awareness of EHR's. I believe a good first step would be to have every employee within a hospital or major healthcare group create their personal EHR. Additionally, every patient would be given the help needed to begin creating their own EHR with the information gathered during their encounter with the facility. This benefit could be promoted as a community service and would serve as a model program for other institutions.

On the commercial side of the HIM field, I can see myself either selling the software systems or conducting the on-site training required to educate the end-users. My successful career as a Senior Account Manager for the largest educational software distributor in the United States demonstrates my ability to communicate well, along with understanding the needs of my customer while delivering

two new students to its 2009-2010 Board as student reps: Matthew Hammitt and Savanna Matuszak, also from The College of St. Scholastica.

Students who are interested in serving as student representatives on the MHIMA Board should contact MHIMA's incoming President, [Stephanie Luthi-Terry](#)

2010 MHIMA Annual Meeting

Save the Date April

28-30, 2010

Our 2010 MHIMA Educational Conference and Annual Meeting will be held at the Northland Inn, 7025 Northland Drive in Brooklyn Park (Minneapolis). The meeting date is a week earlier than in past years.

Watch the [MHIMA Website](#) for registration information on the 2010 Annual Meeting button.

MHIMA 2009-2010 Board Member Communication

Board Member

Emails

Have you discovered that our

products that fit their needs.

The niche that initially sparked my interest was Cancer Tumor Registries. Now that I have discovered that there are many job opportunities within the HIM field, I am preparing myself to be knowledgeable and flexible within the profession.

Thank you for this opportunity to tell you how I will be an asset to the HIM profession.

Coding Roundtable Tool Kit Available

Coding education in Minnesota now has a new resource available to assist your group learning and skill development. A Coding Roundtable Tool Kit has been developed and was introduced at the 2009 Annual Meeting. The Tool Kit can be used by any group of coders who are interested in expanding their coding knowledge and skill. As Vicki Chelf describes it, "you are only limited by your imagination!"

Topics currently available include:

- Interventional Radiology
- Radiology/MRI
- E&M
- Fractures
- Present on Admission
- Congestive Heart Failure

Go to the [MHIMA Website](#), click on 2009 Annual Meeting, Access to Speaker Presentations, and download the Coding Roundtables Tool Kit and the Coding Roundtables presentation. For more information, you can also contact [Vicki Chelf](#) or [Jessica Peterson](#)

2009 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN RESULTS

Thank you to the 290 MHIMA members who completed the SurveyMonkey 2009 Environmental Scan. The results of the Scan have been reviewed by the MHIMA Board and will be communicated to AHIMA. Here's what you reported to be the highest priorities in each of the six categories included in the Scan.

Customer Environment

- #1: Access to affordable continuing education and skills development
- #2: Access to continuing education and skills development

Economic Environment

- #1: HIM salaries are not remaining competitive with other healthcare professions
- #2: Demonstrating value of professional credentials to employers

new website now gives you the opportunity to communicate directly with one of the members of your MHIMA Board of Directors by email? Each of them has an "mnhima.org" webmail email account. To contact them, [CLICK HERE](#)

MHIMA Job Bank Network

Looking for a job? Don't forget to check out the positions listed on our Job Bank on our website. There is no charge to register as a job seeker. It allows you to search through all jobs that employers have posted in the Job Bank. You can also make your resume available to registered employers or privately send your resume to employers of your choice.

Go to [MHIMA's JOB BANK](#), scroll down to the ENTER button, and you're on your way!

Technological Environment

- #1: Preparation of new roles in technology, EHR and informatics
- #2: Recognize, embrace, encourage the challenge of different roles for HIM professionals

Social Environment

- #1: Interoperability of health information across the continuum
- #2: Perceived lack of value of HIM credentials to employers (since credential is not required)

Political Environment

- #1: Implementation of ICD-10
- #2: Need for standardized federal and/or state regulations that address electronic health records

Geophysical Environment

- #1: Enhanced communication to members
- #2: Promote informative and timely information at state levels via electronic tools

These priorities, and the narrative responses included in the Survey, will be considered during the MHIMA Board's upcoming Strategy Planning meeting in early July.

The winner of the \$50 gift certificate was Linda Gaede-Nazer from Rosemount. Congratulations, Linda!

2009-2010 Volunteer Opportunities

Interested in getting involved?

The 2009-2010 MHIMA Project Teams are getting organized for the coming year and invite your involvement. The Board will be conducting a Strategic Planning session on July 10th to finalize the following project activities. We are also moving forward with planning several educational Webinars this next year to bring information to you in a cost-effective way. If you are interested in any of these areas and didn't sign up for them at the Annual Meeting, please email the Project Leaders to find out more information and learn how you can help.

(Please note: if you indicated an interest in one or more of these areas on the 2009 Annual Meeting Survey, we were unable to link your name to your area of interest. Please contact us again!)

- **AAPC Collaboration:** [Carla Tobin](#) or [Mary Talaska](#)
- **Coding Education via Roundtables:** [Carla Tobin](#) or [Jessica Peterson](#)
- **2009 Achieving Coding Excellence:** [Gina Sanvik](#), [Maxine Weiss](#), or [Brenda Wood](#)
- **ICD-10:** [Diane Larson](#)
- **Revenue Cycle Management Education:** [Colleen Malmgren](#)
- **Legal Manual:** [Heidi Onsted](#) or [Chris Bushaw](#)
- **Legislative Alliance:** [Cathy French](#)
- **MMGMA/HIMSS Alliances:** [Amy Watters](#) or [Brian Erickson](#)

- **Copy Fee Legislation:** [Diane Larson](#)
- **MyPHR Promotion** [Mary Bell](#) or [Steph Luthi-Terry](#)
- **MN e-Health Initiatives:** [LaVonne Wieland](#)
- **2010 Annual Meeting** [Annual Meeting Chairs \(Danika Brinda and Kristi Lundgren\)](#)
- **Facility Critical Access:** [Amanda Mass](#) or [Sarah Spoon](#)
- **Attracting Students:** [Carla Pogliano](#) or [Joy Schmitt](#)
- **MHIMA Web Site Development:** [Laura Blabac](#)
- **MHIMA Brochure Development:** [Laura Blabac](#) or [Lisa Kampa](#)
- **Vendor Relations:** [Ranelle Bauer](#)
- **Communications:** [Laura Blabac](#)
- **MHIMA Scholarship Program:** [Sue Jensen](#)
- **Scholarship Fundraising:** [Kari Sattre](#) or [Tracy Kapsner](#)

2009 MHIMA Lobbyist Report

Dominic J. Sposeto, MHIMA Lobbyist

The end of the 2009 legislative session was a bit anticlimactic as compared to recent years. When the governor announced that he did not need a budget agreement with the state legislature but would instead unallot state funds to balance the state budget, he changed the whole end of game scheme. For four days, legislative leaders tried to come up with a response to the governor's ultimatum, without much success.

With just a few hours remaining in the 2009 session, the DFL majorities in the House and Senate reconstituted a tax bill raising over a billion dollars to balance the state budget without unallotments. Both the House and Senate passed the bill just minutes before adjournment. However, everyone at the capitol knew that this bill would be vetoed by the governor, and it was.

The state is now in un-charted territory. Unallotment has been used only four times to balance the state budget and never for such a large amount, \$2.7 billion. It is also unique to begin the state budget biennium with unallotment. This leaves many, like our state's hospitals, in a very uncertain state.

The following are some of major issues monitored for MHIMA this year.

Newborn Screening: The newborn screening bill that I reported on at the annual meeting did not pass. The house and senate authors could not reach an agreement on how to proceed and how to get the bill pass the governor. This means that current law stands as is which is not clear as to how long the health department may keep blood spot records that they receive.

There is a pending court case that has been brought to force the department of health to destroy any newborn screening records that they may be maintaining. Depending on how this case is resolved, this issue could be back again next year. Mayo, the March of Dimes, and others are not really happy with this outcome. They felt the proposed legislation was a decent compromise.

Health Information Technology: The main purpose of this bill was to align state HIT requirements

with the requirements in the American Recovery and Reimbursement Act. It requires that our state electronic medical records must be "qualified electronic health records" according to the ARRA. It gives the commissioner and the E-Health Advisory Committee (formerly called the Health Information and Technology and Infrastructure Advisory Committee) direction to monitor national activity and coordinate the state's response. The commissioner must report to the legislature on any recommended policy changes. The bill also directs the commissioner to seek federal funding and aligns our existing loan program with the federal loan program. (No money is appropriated in this bill. See HHS bill below).

Cost of Copies: The most controversial bill of the session for MHIMA was SF 857, the copying cost proposal from Sen. Mary Olson. As I reported at the annual meeting, this bill did not move this year. After a hearing and several meetings with the Senator, the bill was dropped from committee action. However, an agreement was understood by all parties that this issue would return and that the industry should have a considered response to the proposal.

HHS Finance Bill: There were actually two HHS finance bills passed. The first was put together rather hastily with the thought that it didn't matter much because the governor was going to veto it. When the governor decided to sign the bill, another bill, correcting the mistakes in the first was necessary. For example, one appropriation in the first bill read "230 million" when it was supposed to read "230 thousand". The major issue in the bill for hospitals was the governor's line item veto of the entire General Assistance Medical Care Program, GAMC. This removes \$382 million dollars from the budget in the second year of the biennium. Most of this money goes to hospitals. The GAMC population is adults who earn less than \$8000 a year usually due to some disability. Over half of this population has mental illness and often use hospitals as their primary care providers. I find the veto rather crafty since it doesn't take effect until 2011. Given the state economy and the federal discussions about public health care reform, a lot can happen between now and then. But hospitals planning their budgets for the next few years must obviously address this possible loss of income. There were two items in the bills of interest. They are:

1. The bill appropriates \$4 million for the health information technology revolving loan account under the department of health. This appropriation will not be extended unless it is matched by the federal government under the HITECH Act. (On or before June 2013 \$1.2 million must be transferred to the health care access fund. This is a one-time transfer to reimburse the health care access fund for money appropriated to the revolving fund.)
2. The bill appropriates \$56 million from the general fund and \$19.6 million from the health care access fund to the department of human services for information technology. This relates to administering state health programs, Medical Assistance, General Assistance and MinnesotaCare and not directly to health information management.

Several bills were debated but did not pass this year. They are as follows:

Death Record Replacement: This proposal would have allowed family members to go to court to alter a death record. This issue related to a family whose family member was determined by a medical examiner to have committed suicide. The family did not believe this to be the case. Under current law, only the county coroner, medical examiner or a forensic pathologist may enter the cause or

manner of death. This bill would have given the courts the authority to change a death record.

Genetic Information: This bill attempts to change state law relating to genetic information and who may request and access this information. The bill did not get a hearing this year.

Adoption – Birth Records: This proposal would have established a legal procedure for an adopted person 19 years of age or older to gain access to their original birth record. This would occur unless an affidavit of non-disclosure is on file with the state registrar. The goal is to give adoptive children access to the identity of their parent or parents. The bill passed a couple of committees in the House and Senate but did not come up on the floor of either body.

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