

The 74th House of Delegates (HOD) meeting will occur virtually on October 17, 2020. The HOD meeting objective is to ensure an opportunity for Delegates in all Component State Associations to:

- **Converse:** Through purposeful dialogue, Delegates will identify future opportunities for the profession aligned with AHIMA's Strategic Plan.
- **Catalyze:** Delegates will learn how to spread the value of the health information profession and clarify the role of health information professionals among their communities.
- **Conduct Business:** Delegates will act on items submitted to the House for deliberation.

One of the sessions that Delegates will participate in is a Strategic Pathfinders session. Using the AHIMA Strategy as a baseline, Delegates are asked to react to assumptions on the future of health information topics and shape AHIMA's future by managing health information. This session supports the role of the House as thought leaders. Rather than focus on products or services AHIMA can develop related to each of these topics, Delegates are asked to focus on AHIMA's position within these areas to inform AHIMA's work. There will be six breakout sessions, where Delegates throughout the country will discuss discussion topics pertinent to the Health Information profession.

The breakout session, titled "**The Future of Patient Matching and Identification**" will discuss how identifying and matching patients to their health data is widely recognized as critical to enhancing patient safety, achieving better patient outcomes, and ensuring accurate health information exchange. Without the ability of clinicians to accurately connect a patient to their medical record, lives have been lost, and medical errors have needlessly occurred. AHIMA focused on this issue for years and has identified this as one of its advocacy issues to be addressed in 2020 and beyond.

The breakout session, titled "**Taking the Lead in Data Governance**" will discuss the amount of data currently being generated and available for use in healthcare, is overwhelming, and there needs to be some controls. HIM professionals have been assisting with the governance of the data for a long time AHIMA would like to determine if we are by the members' opinions working in the field. AHIMA would like to examine if HIM professionals are involved as part of a collective team will the integrity of the data be maintained. If we are not, will the information be at risk? AHIMA focused on this issue for years and has identified this as one of its advocacy issues to be addressed in 2020 and beyond.

The breakout session, titled "**Public Health, Ethics and Health Information**" will discuss the role of HIM professionals as data stewards who support public health reporting by governing the collection, management, protection, and sharing of quality health information. Wide gaps have been identified in the reporting of COVID – 19 due in part to the use of paper-based systems. Manual management of this data is error prone and inefficient. To support epidemiologist's objectives and validate the data, public health reporting should move from paper-based system to an electronic one to allow timely, reliable information to make good decisions. While data quality has been an ongoing focus of AHIMA, the current pandemic has identified vulnerabilities in the current healthcare system. AHIMA would like to determine how HIM professionals can have an impact on the accuracy of public health reporting during the pandemic. Best practices need to be identified and followed to ensure allow federal, state, and local health officials to safely and appropriately make decisions on opening businesses, schools, etc.

The breakout session, titled "**Revenue Cycle Challenges for Health Information**" will discuss the role of HI professionals as being critical for determination of what data to collect, training staff, assuring proper coding and more, which is becoming more complex and challenging. Additionally, it has been identified that there is a need for providers to thoroughly understand how to document clinical data so that it can be properly used. Training for providers by HI professionals is critical to assure the proper documentation is included initially. HI professionals with expertise in clinical documentation integrity (CDI) can help providers by keeping up with regulation changes and providing education. Another aspect of revenue cycle that is changing rapidly is in the area of natural language processing (NLP). It is playing a fundamental role in transforming health care operations by unlocking massive amounts of unstructured data contained in medical records and making it accessible for vital clinical and administrative functions

within a medical facility. Nowhere is this more evident today than in the hospital revenue cycle. This is especially important as health care shifts from fee-for-service to value-based models.

The breakout session, titled “**Telehealth in the Future**” will discuss how the recent changes we have seen with the rapid implementation of codes and documentation guidelines will pan out post COVID-19 and the role of HIM professionals in guiding of appropriate documentation for these services, consent for services, training staff of new guidelines, assuring proper coding along with application of necessary modifiers, managing confidentiality and more. Telehealth is here to stay. Without the systematic management of the information involved in telehealth consultations by health information professionals, clinical governance is challenged. Management and dissemination of health information is paramount to the success of telehealth.

While completing this work, we will be asking ourselves:

- What can HI professionals be doing now to get involved in or take the lead in these areas?
- What are we missing?
- What is the view 5 years from now? What does the future look like?

The NYHIMA Delegates will be providing a summary of the AHIMA HOD Session in our next News & Notes so stay tuned for more information.