



# THE NORTHLINE

May 2003

Spring Issue



## INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Anita Sommerfeld, RHIA

I want to thank everyone that participated in the 2003 Annual meeting. For those of you who could not make it, you missed a great meeting at a new location.

This was the first year that AKHIMA experimented with a different Anchorage location; the BP Energy Center. Although our attendance at the pre-conference coding workshop was more than we anticipated, everyone squeezed in and enjoyed Dr. Kelly Butler's presentation. From the feedback received it sounded like everyone enjoyed the new location.

The BP Energy Center is state-of-the-art and provided the meeting space and all audio-visual machines at no cost which was a great cost savings for the Association. Saving money on meeting space will allow us to bring up National speakers.

I look forward to the challenging year that is ahead of us. We have a great Board that is dedicated to improving services to our membership. Please contact any one of the Board members if you have any concerns or ideas, we are your Board and are here to assist you in anyway that we can.

Enjoy our short summer and I look forward to seeing all of you at our Fall continuing education program.

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBER:  
DAWN CARMAN, JD, RHIA**

Congratulations to Dawn Carman, JD, RHIA as the Distinguished Member for 2003/04. Dawn has contributed to AKHIMA by keeping us current with new legal proceeding happening around the State and Nationally.

## ELECTION RESULTS ARE IN!

Congratulations to the in-coming leadership of AKHIMA! These members will be serving the Association for the 2003-04 year in the following capacities:

- ▶ PRESIDENT: Anita Sommerfeld, RHIA
- ▶ PRESIDENT-ELECT: Ann Waters, RHIT, CCS
- ▶ PAST PRESIDENT: Joanne Reed, RHIT, CCS
- ▶ 1st YEAR DIRECTOR: Renee Skeels
- ▶ 2nd YEAR DIRECTOR: Cathy Gross, RHIT
- ▶ TREASURER: Leslie Nightengale, RHIT
- ▶ SECRETARY: Doreen Booth, RHIT
- ▶ DISTINGUISHED MEMBER: Dawn Carman, JD, RHIA
- ▶ NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Richard Jeske, Terry Fults and Carol Barnett.

*A special thanks to those members who have served AKHIMA this past year and who have worked so hard to promote the HIM professional in Alaska.*

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EDITOR: Marianne Dailey	

Our Association is driven by our volunteers, and new ideas are always welcome. Any AKHIMA member wishing to volunteer for office may contact a member of the Nominating Committee. The entire AKHIMA Board is interested in hearing from you in how they might work to improve our Association. Contact information is available on the AKHIMA website: [www.akhima.org](http://www.akhima.org)

## HOUSE OF DELEGATES REPORT—Anita Sommerfeld, RHIA

### Actions taken by HoD in September 2003, San Francisco, California



#### HIT and HIA Accreditation Standards

Accreditation standards for HIA and HIT educational programs are the standards of quality used in accrediting programs that prepare individuals to enter the HIM profession. These standards are used for development, evaluation, and self-analysis of HIM programs. The Council on Accreditation and the Panel of Accreditation Reviewers utilize these standards in the evaluation of a program's relative compliance for accreditation. The Standards were last revised in 1997 and are generally revised every 5 years.

The proposed 2002 revision includes the following:

- Creating separate Standards documents for HIA and HIT Programs
- Consolidating similar issues into one standard
- Incorporating more outcomes-based language.

**Vote:** All changes were approved by the HOD

#### Proposed Amendment to the Student Section of the Bylaws

The proposed amendment broadens the definition of a student member to include students enrolled in coding and Masters Programs approved by AHIMA. Students in accredited HIA and HIT programs continue to be eligible, and eligibility is extended to students in programs that are in the process of seeking initial accreditation / approval.

**Vote:** Amendment to the Bylaws passed.

#### BREAK OUT SESSIONS included:

- Brain storming sessions providing AHIMA with feedback to set goals and objectives for the organization.
- Accreditation of coding programs that are trying to supply the industry with new coders by offering 8-week coding programs. There were many differing opinions: it would be lowering our standards, we need coders as quickly as possible, we can't wait for people to go through a 1 or 2 year program.

#### ELECTRONIC HOUSE OF DELEGATES:

In January 2003 the House of Delegates had the opportunity to vote on a bylaw amendment electronically. The proposed bylaw amendment related to altering Article III, Membership Section 4 by striking the words – “including those” and inserting the words – “a program” and “a certificate program developed and offered by an accredited / approved program”.

The vote was taken electronically from January 6 – 21, 2003. The proposed bylaws amendment was defeated. The vote required a two-thirds vote of the House to pass. Of 206 delegates, there were 191 votes cast: yes: 111; no: 79, with 1 abstention.

## CODING ROUNDTABLE & CoP

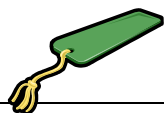
Janie Miller, RHIT, CCS has taken on the Coordinator role for the AKHIMA Coding Roundtable. Janie states she is looking forward to the challenge of being the Coding Roundtable Coordinator. She notes that a successful Roundtable will rely on good communication and working together.

July 13 and 14 Janie will be attending Roundtable training, which will include participation in a roundtable discussion with the Chicago-area Coding Roundtable

Janie requests that questions and suggestions on what the coders in the State would like to see happen be emailed to her at [janie@akhima.org](mailto:janie@akhima.org).

Pat Chapman has agreed to co-facilitate the Community of Practice-Alaska. Of note, the Alaska CoP was chosen by AHIMA as the "spotlighted" CoP for the month of May.

## BOOKMARK THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE



Did you know there are 3 ways to access all the valuable HIM-related content in the FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge (BoK)? Here's how:

► At <http://library.ahima.org>. On the BoK home page, click on "Log In" in the red bar near the top of the page. You'll need your member ID and the password you use for the Communities of Practice to log in. You can even bookmark this page. When using Internet Explorer, pull down the Favorites menu at the top of the screen and select "Add to Favorites," then click OK. If you're using Netscape, pull down the Bookmarks menu and select "Add Bookmark."

► Through the Communities of Practice (CoP). Once you log into the CoP using your member ID and password, click on the blue and green computer icon under the purple and yellow bars at the top of the page. "Body of Knowledge" appears under the computer icon. This will take you right to the BoK-you don't even have to log in again.

► Through the AHIMA home page. Go to <http://www.ahima.org> and mouse over "Members Only." In the drop down menu, highlight FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge. Once you reach the BoK home page, click on "Log In" in the red bar near the top of the page. You'll use your member ID and CoP password to log in.



## NEWS BYTES

### CMS REVIEWS "TRANSFER DRGS"

Currently, hospitals transferring Medicare patients to another post-acute facility are reimbursed by Medicare on a per diem basis vs. getting the full DRG rate.

CMS has proposed to increase the number of DRGs in this policy from the current 10 to 29. This would save Medicare approximately \$160 million in 2004. This proposal is open for a 60-day public comment period, which began May 9th. The revised policy would be effective for discharges on or after October 1, 2003. More information is available at [www.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.cms.hhs.gov)

Source: *Transfer Trauma; Jeff Tieman; Modern Healthcare*; May 19, 2003

### UNANNOUNCED JCAHO SURVEYS

JCAHO is giving plenty of warning that they are changing the accreditation survey process.

Currently, organizations can pretty much anticipate the general 30-45 day period they will be seeing surveyors. However, beginning in 2006, the Joint Commission will move to "unannounced surveys". This is an effort to continue prompting facilities to remain current with self-assessment and compliance activities.

Be sure to take advantage of AHIMA's free member services available on the web site.

## RECRUITMENT: GET OVER THE INTIMIDATION



In the last issue recruitment into HIM was related to the body's need for red blood cell renewal. Without incoming fresh faces and ideas, the profession is anemic. Your help with recruiting is essential to keep the profession vital.

The idea of "recruiting" is often unappealing to the predominately introvert HIM professional. First, it sounds like public speaking is required, which can be a challenge to many of us. Second, many are unfamiliar with how to go about recruiting and can be intimidated. Let's talk about both of these concerns.

Get over the public speaking thing. If you can direct a fellow shopper to the pickles in the grocery store, you have the speaking skills to recruit. What gives you the nerve to talk to that stranger in the grocery store? You have something in common—you are both shopping for the best deals and trying to quickly get out of the store. You form a bond, if only for a moment.

Talking to a "profession seeker" is very similar. Many people center their satisfaction, and discussions, around their employment. Most people like being challenged, learning new things and developing new competencies. Do you have the profession for them! All it takes is sharing your experience with others. *Hopefully, it is positive experience. After all, we are talking recruiting INTO the profession.*

The second issue is unfamiliarity with how to recruit. As mentioned above, it can be as simple as having discussions with friends or acquaintances. It was reported some years ago that the average person goes through 3 career changes in a lifetime. You might be surprised at how interested others might be to hear about a growing profession with many opportunities for advancement.

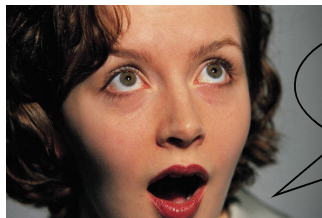
High school counselors and job placement organizations are great places to leave information about HIM as career choices. Call ahead to make an appointment. Have a 10 minute discussion and leave the material. That is all it takes.

Before you do any recruiting, be sure have a grasp on the points others will be interested in: What kind of education do I need? Where and how can I get that education? How much money does this kind of job pay? What kinds of places can I work? What kind of future or job security does this provide???? If you don't already know the answers, AHIMA has provided us with some wonderful tools on its website. Start collecting some information and become more aware of the profession of which you are a part. Then just start sharing!

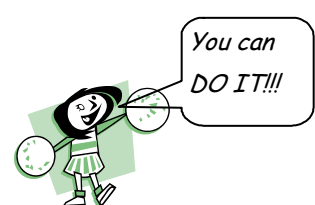
Check out [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org) and look under "HIM CAREERS" and check out the drop down menu.

Next issue:

How to participate in a career fair!



*But... it's a hideous thought.*



## MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The 2004 annual meeting Program Committee would like your input on several items. Your feedback will determine our plans for next year, and help us to make it another successful conference.

1. Some of you have requested the conference end early on the final day. Others feel they are coming for the information, and want it to continue until 5:00 pm. Would you like Friday's meeting to end at:
  - a. 3:00 pm
  - b. 4:00 pm
  - c. 5:00 pm
  - d. Other\_\_\_\_\_
  
2. We have had a silent auction the past two years. It has been well received and is a way to raise funds to help support our programs. We would like to improve it. Some ideas are:
  - a. Separate the final bids from the Thursday evening function.
  - b. End the auction at the end of Friday's sessions.
  - c. Have a silent auction on Wednesday for the coding books/products.
  - d. Other\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. We would like input on our Thursday evening function. The past two years we have had an awards type get-together, with hors d'oeuvres, finger foods, drinks, desserts, and the end of the silent auction. Those who have attended have thoroughly enjoyed it. Attendance has been low, however, and we would like to know what you would like.
  - a. Don't change a thing
  - b. Continue as is, but lower the price (\$35 this year)
  - c. Have a "regular" dinner
  - d. Have a different function
  - e. Ideas\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Vendor participation has slowly been increasing each year. It is difficult to convince vendors to come to Alaska, and a lot of effort is expended to get them here. So that we spend the time of the Program Committee wisely, please let us know the types of vendors you would most like to see at the conference.
  
  
5. What types of presentations would you like to see next year?

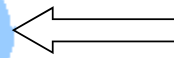
**Please send your comments on these items and any other issues regarding the annual meeting to Cathy Gross at [cathy@akhima.org](mailto:cathy@akhima.org) or FAX them to her at 907-874-7167**

**Thanks so much for your input.**

www.akhima.org

Visit us at

Start making plans NOW to attend AHIMA's annual national conference. This year the conference will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, from October 18-23, 2003. More information can be obtained at [www.ahima.org/convention/](http://www.ahima.org/convention/)



2003 AHIMA NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXHIBIT

# THE NORTHLINE

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