



President's Message

Gloria Litton, RHIA, CCS

Hello everyone. The summer has completely flown by and it's time for our new VHIMA year to begin. I am really looking forward to this new year and all the things that it has in store for us. One of the biggest events for us this year is the proximity of the AHIMA National Convention in Washington, DC this October. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the International Federation of Health Records Organization (IFHRO). This will be the first opportunity for many of us to attend a national convention. In any event, we are in for a treat.

Our annual meeting took place in Roanoke in May and was a great success. The evaluation responses were very positive from the members and the vendors. The Hotel Roanoke is a great location for this meeting. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard in planning and carrying out this meeting.

From our conversations at our recent Strategic Planning meeting in July, I know that your representatives on the Board are anxious to make this a great year by doing what we can to provide the

services that you need. Based on input from you, our members, we have made some changes to enhance the services that we will provide for you in the upcoming year.

Your input and ideas are crucial to help the board meet your needs.

One of those changes will be rotating our annual meetings in two locations in the state. These locations will be Williamsburg in 2005 and again in Roanoke in 2006. Also beginning in 2006, we will have 2-day educational sessions instead of 2½ in hopes of keeping down costs and making it more convenient for members to attend. We will also provide a one day fall educational session in the opposing location to provide educational opportunities for the entire state each year. In 2005, there will be a 2-½ day educational ses-

sion in Williamsburg in May and a 1-day session in the fall in Roanoke. In 2006, a 2-day session will be held in Roanoke and a 1-day session in Williamsburg.

Another change we are making is to have half our Board meetings via phone conference to cut down on travel time and time away from work for our volunteers and elected officers. With so much emphasis on cutting back on time away from work, this makes it easier for us to take care of VHIMA business but meet the needs of our employers as well.

With this change, we hope that this will enable more of you to become active volunteers in the leadership of the VHIMA association. We are eager to have "new blood" join the Board in the coming year. Your input and ideas are crucial to make changes and conduct business that meets the needs of each of our members. In October, you will receive a willingness to serve form from Carol Smith, our Nominating Committee chairman. Carol is working hard to provide detailed information for each of the offices; we hope this will

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TCC HIT Program Changes Curriculum

Tidewater Community College's Health Information Technology program at Virginia Beach has made a change in their curriculum. In the fall of 2004, all the courses needed for new coding professionals have been moved to the first 3 semesters of the RHIT curriculum.

This new format will "fast track" those individuals who want to pursue a career in coding while at the same time completing courses that will fulfill some of the requirements of the associate's degree.

President's Message


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encourage those who would like to participate but are unsure of the responsibilities of these offices to accept a spot on the ballot for the 2005-2006 year. However, volunteer opportunities are not limited to elected positions. There are many opportunities to serve on committees in many other ways.

"Finding the time" to volunteer seems to be a task we all struggle with. However, I challenge you all to "make the time" in the upcoming year to step up and participate in this organization. Come share your ideas and help build an association that will provide each of us the things we need professionally as well as socially.

I look forward to working with you this year and am open to any comments or ideas you might have regarding VHIMA services and how to meet your needs. Please feel free to contact me at my office at (434) 982-7651 or email me at gloria.litton@mjh.org. I hope to see many of you in DC in October.

Gloria



The Newsletter of
VHIMA
Virginia Health Information Management Association

The *Newsletter of VHIMA* is published quarterly under the direction of the Virginia Health Information Management Association (VHIMA) Board.

Items should be emailed to the editor at hlventura@mail2coach.com or via the email on AHIMA's CoP. Items can also be mailed to the editor at 725 Kingsale Road, Suffolk, VA 23437, or faxed to 757.857.8114.

Ad rates:

Full page	\$100.00
Half page	\$ 50.00
Quarter page	\$ 25.00

Ads should be emailed to the address above in .jpg, .gif, or .pdf format. Checks should be made payable to VHIMA and sent to the editor at the address above.

Editor: Lou Ventura, RHIA

VHIMA President: Gloria Litton, RHIA, CCS

SAVE THE DATE!!

VHIMA 54th Annual Convention
Wednesday-Friday, May 5-7, 2005

Kingsmill Marriott
Williamsburg, Virginia

VHIMA Strategic Plan 2004-2005

Membership

- Develop a recruitment packet for new members, current RHIA and RHIT program students, and new graduates.
- Update the membership brochure.

Recruitment

- Put AHIMA Recruitment CD on the website and send to Virginia RHIA and RHIT program directors.
- Appoint a recruitment chair.

Education

- Support current local coding roundtable meetings by offering speakers and advertisement.

HIPAA

- Participate in VHHA and bar study on Release of Information regulations.
- Participate in AHIMA Privacy Advocacy initiatives.

Annual Meeting

- Hold vendors' reception in President's Suite for participating vendors.
- Reduce to two meeting locations (Williamsburg and Roanoke) that will be rotated every other year.
- Hold a one-day seminar each fall in the alternate location in an effort to meet educational needs for the entire state.

Communication

- Update email distribution list for mass emails to the membership in an effort to reduce mailing costs.
- Move to electronic distribution of newsletter in 1st quarter 2005.

Officer Spotlight

Introducing "Officer Spotlight," a new feature we plan to run each issue to show a more personal side of the members of the VHIMA Board of Directors, along with their perspective on volunteering. Enjoy!

Gloria Litton, RHIA, CCS 2004-2005 President

Hometown: Chesapeake, VA (In Charlottesville for past 11 years)

Fondest childhood memory: Visiting my grandparents in North Carolina

Marital status: Married for 22 years

Children: Stephanie, 18, and Emily, 15

Pets: 3 dogs and 2 cats

First job: Wrapping Christmas presents at Military Circle Mall in Norfolk

First HIM job: Evening filing position at Norfolk General (before it was Sentara)

Current occupation: Director of HIS at Martha Jefferson Hospital

What's your favorite thing about the HIM profession and/or your job? Working with a variety of people at various levels of the health care organization. I also enjoy teaching.

Current VHIMA position held: President

Why did you run for/volunteer for this position? I enjoy working with the Board and want to make a difference for our association.

How much time does the position take from your work and home life? About 6 – 8 hours per month. However, other things come up that take additional time but are usual things that are done once a year.

What do you like best about your VHIMA position? The opportunity to work on national HIM issues that affect our profession.

Favorite night on the town: Dinner with my husband

Favorite food: Italian

Favorite drink: Mountain Dew

Favorite movies: "Hope Floats"

Favorite TV shows: ER

Ideal vacation: I would like to visit Egypt one day

I can't resist: Homemade cookies

What's the best advice you've received and from whom? Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. The Holy Bible (Matthew 6:27)

What achievement are you most proud of? Going back to school to get my bachelor's degree at age 40.

Marion Swaim, RHIA 2004-2005 Past President

Hometown: Virginia Beach, VA

Fondest childhood memory: Fourth of July 1966. It was the last year I thought all of the celebrations and fireworks were just for me!! I was born on the 4th and thought it was all about me until I was 8!

Marital status: Married 23 years this November

Children: Katie, 19, and Sarah, 15

Pets: Syndi the Beagle, Boomer the Fat Cat (26 lbs) and Maddie Cat

First job: McDonald's at Great Neck and Shore Drive VB

First HIM job: Medical Record Clerk, Pitt County Memorial Hospital

Current occupation: Corporate Director, HIM Sentara Healthcare

What's your favorite thing about the HIM profession and/or your job? There is never a dull moment and I feel challenged daily.

Why did you run for/volunteer for this position? I was President in 1995 for the first time and found it to be very rewarding; it enabled me to meet many people throughout the country and really be on top of critical information in HIM.

How much time does the position take from your work and home life? Being President takes less time than you would think, because you make everyone else do the work! :-). It takes about 4 hours a month, and half of that is getting ready for the board meetings. There is also travel involved, Leadership Conference, Team Talks, and AHIMA convention, but you know those dates well in advance.

What do you like best about your VHIMA position? Networking with HIM professionals throughout the country and influencing HIM practice as a delegate.

Favorite night on the town: Quiet dinner with friends

Favorite food: Pasta and shellfish

Favorite drink: Diet Coke with Lime

Favorite movies: I can tell you I don't like scary films at all, but I enjoy most others

Favorite TV shows: "Will and Grace," and anything on HGTV

Ideal vacation: Relaxing at the Beach

I can't resist: Chips and Salsa

What's the best advice you've received and from whom? Use your energy to change things within your scope of authority or influence, don't waste energy worrying about things you can't change.

What achievement are you most proud of? My children and my marriage.

Joint Commission's Quality Check® Helps Health Care Service Choice

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Ill. – July 15, 2004) The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations today launched a new generation of reporting health care information about the quality and safety of care provided in its accredited health care organizations across the country.

The Joint Commission's Quality Check® will provide clear, objective data to individuals that will permit them to compare local hospitals, home care agencies, nursing homes, laboratories, and ambulatory care organizations with others on state and national bases. Further, the Joint Commission will, for the first time, provide hospital-specific information about clinical performance in the care of patients with four major conditions. These include heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and pregnancy and related conditions.

Individuals will also be able to determine how health care organizations compare with others in meeting national requirements that help them prevent devastating medical accidents. The requirements specifically seek to avoid misidentification of patients, surgery on the wrong body part, miscommunication among caregivers, unsafe use of infusion pumps, medication mix-ups, problems with equipment alarm systems, and infections acquired in the health care setting.

Consumers can access Quality Check at www.qualitycheck.org and search for health care organizations by name, type, and/or location. Interactive links to information are designed to help individuals better understand how to use and interpret the information presented. Individuals are encouraged to talk with their doctors about the information presented on Quality Check.

"More than ever before, Americans are seeking information to help them make sound decisions about their health care," says Dennis S. O'Leary, M.D., president, Joint Commission. "Quality Check is an important new source of quality-related information that will substantially enrich the consumer's knowledge base."

"We are very pleased that comparative data on hospital performance regarding four major conditions will be available on Quality Check, and we look forward to the inclusion of additional conditions as soon as possible," said Joyce Dubow, associate director, AARP Public Policy Institute. "The Joint Commission's decision to provide the public with the opportunity to see how well hospitals compare to one another should stimulate these institutions to improve care and also permit patients to make more informed choices about hospital care."

Quality Check uses symbols, such as checks, pluses and minuses to make it easy for consumers to compare health care organizations. Quality Check reports include:

- **The organization's accreditation decision and effective date**
- **Health care services provided by the organization that are accredited by the Joint Commission**
- **National Quality Improvement Goals**, which portray the performance of hospitals in caring for patients with heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and pregnancy and related conditions. These currently apply only to hospitals.
- **National Patient Safety Goals**, which display the performance of health care organizations in taking specific steps to prevent serious accidents in health care. The Goals and their related discrete requirements are specific to different types of health care settings accredited by the Joint Commission (for example, hospitals, ambulatory care organizations, clinical laboratories).
- **Commentary about the Quality Check report**, if the organization chooses to submit one for inclusion
- **Requirements for improvement**, if applicable

The Joint Commission's Quality Check is just one source of information a person should use in determining whether a given health care organization is likely to meet his or her needs. When deciding where to go for care, individuals should consult with their doctors and other health care professionals about the advantages or special characteristics of each health care organization being considered. The Joint Commission offers a free series of Helping You Choose brochures at www.jcaho.org, or 630.792.5800.

The Joint Commission's original organization-specific performance reports were first published in 1994. Quality Check is the new generation of these reports. Historical Performance Reports will continue to be available at the Quality Check website, www.qualitycheck.org. For consumers unable to access Quality Check online, please call the Joint Commission's Customer Service Center at 630.792.5800, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT, during weekdays.

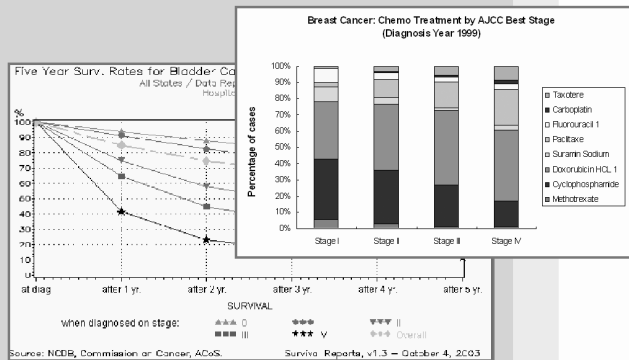


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VHIMA FAQs

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were developed to answer the most common questions we receive from new members, potential members, students, and vendors. They will be posted on the VHIMA web site. If you think of other questions to add, please notify any member of the VHIMA Board.

What is VHIMA?

VHIMA is the Virginia Health Information Management Association, a Component State Association (CSA) and affiliate of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

How do I join VHIMA?

VHIMA currently has three membership categories:

Active—you must be an active member of AHIMA, employed or residing in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and indicate at the time of payment of the AHIMA annual dues your desire to belong to the Virginia State Association. An active member can vote, hold office and to serve as a member of the Board of Directors, Committee chairman, Committee member or delegate to the AHIMA.

Associate—you must be an associate member of AHIMA, employed or residing in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and indicate at the time of payment of the AHIMA annual dues your desire to belong to the Virginia State Association or any other individual interested in the purposes of VHIMA who does not meet the qualifications for active membership. Associate members have all rights and privileges to membership, including that of service on committees and subcommittees with voice and vote; however they shall not be entitled to other voting privileges, hold office or serve as delegates.

Student—you must hold a student membership in AHIMA and be enrolled in a program located in this Commonwealth. A student member is entitled to attend business and educational meetings of this VHIMA without payment of a registration fee. A student member may serve as a committee member with voice, but cannot vote, hold office or serve as a member of the Board of Directors, committee chairman or delegate to the AHIMA.

I am a representative of a vendor who does business with the health information profession in Virginia. Can my company or I be a member of VHIMA?

At this time, VHIMA does not have a corporate membership category. You can, however, be a member of VHIMA if you meet any of the criteria in the above three membership categories.

How is VHIMA structured?

An elected Board of Directors governs VHIMA with the assistance of committee chairs, most of which are appointed. The elected officers consist of a President, Past President, President Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer (2-year term), Elected Director, 1st year Delegate and 2nd year Delegate.

The committees for 2004-2005 consist of Public Relations/Newsletter, Scholarship/Education, Membership, VHIMA CoP (Communities of Practice), Coding/Data Quality Consultant, Website, Nominating (appointed from elected committee), Annual Meeting, Program, and HIPAA Summit Leader. The presidents of local associations are considered ad hoc members of the VHIMA board.

To see the individuals currently holding the above officer and committee chair positions, go to www.vhima.com then click on About VHIMA.

I see VHIMA has a web site. Tell me more about it.

VHIMA's web site went live in 2002 and continues to become a communication tool for the membership in conjunction with AHIMA's Communities of Practice (CoP).

In addition to finding out more about VHIMA and its board, members more and more often are turning to the web site for convention information, job postings, vendor links, and the VHIMA newsletter—gathering information electronically rather than in hard copy. It's just one more way VHIMA is keeping up with the 21st century trends.

Who do I contact if I have questions about VHIMA?

Membership Information	Lee Murray (804-627-5151)
Volunteer Information	Gloria Litton (434-982-7651) or Linda Vernon (804-754-3302)
Education Information	Website (www.vhima.com)
Legislative Information	Marion Swaim (757-395-8569)
Newsletter Information	Lou Ventura (757-857-8384)
CoP Information	Margaret Hulvey (mlhulvey@aol.com)

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VHIMA FAQs (continued from page 6)

Who do I contact if I want to volunteer with VHIMA?

If you want to volunteer in an *elected* capacity, complete the Willingness to Serve form, which is on the www.vhima.com web site.

If you want to volunteer in a *non-elected* capacity, contact the current President or President Elect to discuss your interest (see above). You can also obtain the current officers' contact information from www.vhima.com.

How does VHIMA communicate with its members?

Currently, VHIMA communicates with its membership in four different ways.

Via AHIMA's Communities of Practice (CoP) In 2003, VHIMA launched a Virginia:Geographic CoP that is accessed through AHIMA's CoP. AHIMA/VHIMA members are automatically provided access to the CoP, and this method of communication is ideal because it is multidirectional—members can communicate between themselves, with the VHIMA board, and the board can communicate to the members. The CoP also provides several methods of communication—email, links, resources, and community discussion threads. To begin, click on the “How Do I Get Started?” FAQ within the Virginia CoP.

Quarterly Newsletter In 2004, VHIMA began a quarterly newsletter distribution to its active members. The newsletter will be distributed through 2004 in hard copy; in 2005, it will be available through the CoP and VHIMA's website ONLY. Members are encouraged to submit information on matters of professional concern to the editor of the newsletter.

Website VHIMA's web site went live in 2002 and continues to become a communication tool for the membership in conjunction with AHIMA's Communities of Practice (CoP). In addition to finding out more about VHIMA and its board, members more and more often are turning to the web site for convention information, job postings, vendor links, and the VHIMA newsletter—gathering information electronically rather than in hard copy. It's just one more way VHIMA is keeping up with the 21st century trends.

It's **critical** that you keep your AHIMA profile up to date, **including a valid email address**, at all times in order to receive the latest in VHIMA news.

What educational opportunities does VHIMA offer?

VHIMA holds an annual convention in early May each year, alternating the location between Roanoke and Williamsburg.

In 2005, VHIMA will begin holding a one-day education session in the alternate location (wherever the annual convention for that year is NOT being held). For example, the 2005 annual convention will be held in Williamsburg, so the educational session will be held in Roanoke. Watch www.vhima.com for more information.

An Invitation to Volunteer

The 2004-2005 VHIMA Board is searching for two volunteers to fill two board positions for the upcoming year.

The positions are **Programs Chair** and **Arrangements Chair**. Both positions enjoy *ample* assistance from all members of the board and can appoint their own committee members (in accordance with the VHIMA bylaws).

Please contact President Gloria Litton via phone (434-982-7651) or email (gloria.litton@mjh.org) for more details.

Are You Ready for ICD-10?

AHIMA's website, www.ahima.org, has a four-year implementation plan for ICD-10 that's worth a look.

Click on “ICD-10 Preparation Checklist” on AHIMA's home page to find a detailed outline of what you can do to get ready for the transition. A brief summary of the article appears below.

2004—create an implementation planning team and start the initial education process.

2005—identifying and budgeting for required IS changes and assessing, budgeting, and implementing clinician and coder education.

2006—implement required IS changes, follow up assessment of documentation practices, and increasing coder education.

2007—finalize system changes, test claims transactions with payers, intensive coder education, monitoring coding accuracy and reimbursement with DRG impact, resolving post-implementation issues.

2008—monitoring coding accuracy, reimbursement, DRG impact, coding productivity, and continuing appropriate coder education.

Share The News!

The Board and newsletter editor are planning future editions of the newsletter and need your assistance. We'd like to spotlight educators and noteworthy professionals (see page 3), as well as announce newly credentialed members. Contact any one of the board members or the newsletter editor to share the news!

2004 AHIMA Summer Team Talks/Leadership Conference Report

By Linda Vernon, RHIA

Over the weekend of July 16-18, 2004, I had the pleasure of representing Virginia as your President-Elect during the AHIMA Summer Team Talks and Leadership Conference in Chicago, IL. It was a most invigorating time for me, and I came back excited and with lots of knowledge to share with you.

The conference lasted two and a half days, and was full of interesting topics and great networking opportunities. One opportunity I took advantage of was visiting the AHIMA headquarters. What an impressive place! It was nice to see where people I've talked with work and how they function on a day-to-day basis. I also got some great pictures of Lake Michigan, Millennium Park, and the Magnificent Mile from the 21st floor!

One of the sessions I attended was "Volunteers: Our Most Precious Asset." The word volunteer is defined as both a noun and a verb:

- (n) - One who serves or acts of his or her own free will.
- (n) - One who gives help, does a service or takes an obligation voluntarily.
- (v) - To give or offer to give on one's own initiative.
- (v) - To enter into or offer to enter into a venture of one's own free will.

We discussed why people volunteer, why they don't, and the benefits of volunteering in a professional association. I am sure you can come up with some good Do's and Don'ts but I want to point out some of the benefits of volunteering:

- gain a state or national perspective on issues facing the profession
- enhance your leadership skills and abilities
- strengthen your professional network
- become more valuable to your current employer and more marketable to potential employers
- establish new personal friendships that can last a lifetime

For those members who are not in active practice (like myself), you can volunteer and become active in the Association to remain connected. When I left my HIM position, I realized that I did not want to lose the contacts that I had made over the years, and my involvement with VHIMA would only help me to be more marketable should I need or want to go back to work.

Involvement at the state level will help you stay on top of issues facing the profession, help you maintain your profes-

sional network, and enable you to expand that network.

Time may be a factor in your decision to volunteer; that's understandable, because it is for most of us. Start small, remember the benefits, and keep in mind that the individuals who have previously volunteered are available to help.

Your contribution to the profession and VHIMA are very valuable. Volunteer!

Tidewater HIMA Update

By Joanne Neal, RHIT, CCS-P, CPC

Juanita Davis, RHIT has been appointed Professional Development Chair and **Helen Green, RHIA** will serve as Membership Chair for the Tidewater Health Information Management Association (THIMA) for 2004-2005.

THIMA plans to hold three membership meetings this year. Proposed dates for two of these meetings are Friday, November 5, 2004 and Friday, March 18, 2005 for the Annual Meeting. Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

For the 2004-2005 year, THIMA has reduced the number of scheduled meetings from four to three. Additionally, there are no meetings scheduled for April or May in an effort to encourage members to attend VHIMA's annual meeting in May.

November's meeting will focus on coding. Anyone who is interested or knows of anyone interested in presenting at a membership meeting, contact **Juanita Davis** at 757-588-1550.

Changes to bylaws were proposed and passed out to members at the July meeting. These will be voted on at the meeting on November 5. Proposed changes include dates for fiscal year, meeting requirements, eligibility requirements, election process and reduction of number of standing committees.

Members who did not attend the July meeting can call **Christina Upton, RHIT** at 757-683-5468 to request a copy of proposed bylaw changes.

MORE Share The News!

Southwest HIMA Update

By Lois McFarland,

The Southwest HIMA has begun planning its fall workshop, scheduled for November 5, 2004 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Wyndham Hotel in Roanoke. Six different guest speakers are slated to present. SWHIMA plans to celebrate its 45th year at this meeting, and we are hoping to have a good turn out.

SWHIMA is also contacting past members in a drive to reactivate their membership with SWHIMA.

Board members for the 2004-2005 are:

President: **Lois McFarland, RHIT, CCS**

President Elect: **Amor Hypes, RHIT**

Secretary: **Marshall Griffin, CCS, CPC, CPC-H**

Treasurer: **Kathy King, CCS**

Program Chair: **Colleen Sherk, RHIT**

All are employees in the Clinical Information department of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

VHIMA Awards Scholarship

At the VHIMA annual convention in Roanoke this year, VHIMA proudly awarded a \$1000.00 scholarship to **Karen Phipps, RHIA**. Karen will continue her studies towards a Masters of HIM degree via correspondence at St. Scholastica in Minnesota.

Congratulations and best wishes, Karen!

Make an early New Year's Resolution to get Internet access!

In 2005, the VHIMA News will be available ON THE WEBSITE ONLY !

www.vhima.com



A group of attendees at the VHIMA annual convention in Roanoke in May gathered in the President's Suite to watch the final episode of "Friends."

Back Row, L-R: Outgoing President Marion Swaim, Paula Cottee, Incoming President Gloria Litton, Dawn Burris.

Front Row, L-R: Linda Vernon, Sandy Knapik, Mystery Guest, Karen Phipps, Cindy Phelps.

The Newsletter of




Virginia Health Information Management Association

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www.vhima.com

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Did you know...



Are you ready?

National Health Information and Technology Week
November 7—13, 2004

Visit AHIMA's web site for great ideas, press releases, promotional items, and other ways to celebrate US!

2004 AHIMA-IFHRO



October 9-14, 2004
Washington, DC USA

Are you registered?

Go to www.ahima.com and click on the 2004 IFHRO Congress and AHIMA National Convention button.

The **National Alliance for Health Information Technology** is a diverse partnership of leaders from all health-care sectors working to leverage technology to achieve measurable improvements in patient safety, quality of care and operating performance. The Alliance collaborates with healthcare and government leaders to accelerate the implementation of world-class, standards-based information technology aimed at creating the most effective, safe, unified, and inclusive health system possible. Since its founding in 2002, the Chicago-based Alliance has helped forge consensus and accelerate progress on such important initiatives as barcodes and electronic health records. More information about the Alliance is available at www.nahit.org.