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## President's Message

Here we are already in February, the shortest and traditionally coldest month of the year. As I write this, the month is living up to its reputation; we have had several mornings of single digit temperatures here in Sedalia. The groundhog has already seen his/her shadow and has gone back underground for another six weeks. What this has to do with the arrival of the Spring Equinox that brings the Northern Hemisphere consistently warmer weather I've never been able to decipher, but I digress. I'm ready for spring, our meeting at the Lake and, of course, the start of the baseball season. Hopefully, the Cardinals will overtake the Cubs this year.

Although the winter months are generally a time where not much happens, the MHIMA Board and various Committees have been busy. In addition to all of the hard work that goes in to preparing this newsletter, the Annual Meeting Committee is hard at work too; lining up speakers, finalizing the agenda, signing up vendors for the vendor show, deciding on our food and beverage choices, etc. The Nominating Committee is gathering names of nominees, making phone calls and meeting to bring a full slate of candidates to our membership (*it's not too late; nominations are accepted until February 20*). Our delegates are preparing for attending Winter Team Talks, either in Las Vegas or combined with Hill Day in Washington, D.C. And our Awards Committee is gathering names of outstanding HIM practitioners to recognize (*nominations are open until February 15*).

One item of discussion at every Board meeting is how best to communicate with our membership. Something we are trying that might help us communicate more easily is setting up groups in Facebook and LinkedIn online networking groups. I invite those of you who are members of either to join the MHIMA group. It's easy, click on "join this group" and a message is sent to me to approve your membership. Once you are approved, you will be able to see and communicate with all of the other members. We set it up as a closed group (members have to be approved by moderator) to keep spammers out.

You can access Facebook by going to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and you can access LinkedIn by going to [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com). If enough members start using these sites, the Board will then look into the possibility of having a blog on our web site. Wanting to be good stewards of our finances, we don't want to spend the money on creating a member specific blog until we are sure our membership wants and will use it.

**President's Day**

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**MHIMA Vision:**

*MHIMA will dedicate efforts and resources to serving members by increasing, promoting, and perpetuating the visibility of the health information management profession through education, communication and advocacy.*

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## *Surgeon General's Family Health History Tool*

The US Department of Health and Human Services released an updated and improved version of the Surgeon General's Internet-based family health history tool. The new tool makes it easier for consumers to assemble and share family health history information. It can also help practitioners make better use of health history information so they can provide more informed and personalized care for their patients.

"This valuable tool can put family histories to work to improve patient well-being and the quality of care," former HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt said in a press release. "The tool is built on health information technology standards that make it more convenient for consumers and more useful for practitioners. It is ready for use in electronic health records. And its software code will be openly available to other health organizations, so they can customize and build on its standards base."



"Family history has always been an important part of good healthcare, but it has been underused," said Acting Surgeon General Steven Galson, a rear admiral in the US Public Health Service, in a press release. "Today, with our growing knowledge of genetics, family history is becoming even more important. The new tool will help consumers and clinicians alike. It will also serve as a platform for developing new risk assessment software that will help in screening and prevention of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other conditions."

For more information visit <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/01/20090113a.html>

## *Senate Passes Stimulus Package, House-Senate Conference to Commence*

On February 10, the U.S. Senate passed its version of HR 1, the "American Recovery and Investment Act." Senate and House leaders will now conference to work out differences in the legislative package. The Senate passed the \$838 billion stimulus legislation 61-37 earlier this week after voting 61-38 on February 9 to invoke cloture on the Collins-Nelson amendment. Invoking cloture limited further debate on the amendment and enabled the legislation to move forward. Sixty votes are needed to invoke cloture in the Senate and this effectively prevents a filibuster, or, endless debate on an issue. Republicans Susan Collins of Maine, Olympia Snowe of Maine, and Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania joined 56 Democrats and two independents on the cloture vote. The current Senate bill stands at \$838.2 billion as scored by the Congressional Budget Office and the three Republicans will again be needed to reach the 60 vote threshold once HR 1 emerges from conference. This legislation does contain approximately \$20 billion in funding for the implementation of electronic health records including funds for work force training and education. The House legislation's total spending was approximately \$819 billion.

Follow the link to visit AHIMA's Advocacy and Public Policy Center Web page to keep up with the latest news from Washington. <http://www.ahima.org/dc/>

President Obama's economic stimulus plan includes his vision to improve economic conditions by requiring all medical records be electronic within five years. While President Obama's plan for electronic medical records embedded in his economic stimulus plan has the potential to create an estimated 212,000 new jobs, there are concerns. To read more on the health information issues that will be crucial to achieving healthcare reform click on the link:

[http://library.ahima.org/xpedio/groups/public/documents/ahima/bok1\\_042417.hcsp?dDocName=bok1\\_042417](http://library.ahima.org/xpedio/groups/public/documents/ahima/bok1_042417.hcsp?dDocName=bok1_042417)

## February Hot Topics Survey-President Obama's Plan for Electronic Records

As the article on page 3 discusses, part of President Obama's economic stimulus plan to revive the economy includes a massive effort to modernize health care by making all health records standardized and electronic. The plan is to computerize all health records within five years. It sounds good, but it won't be easy.

Only about 8% of the nation's 5,000 hospitals and 17% of its 800,000 physicians currently use the kind of common computerized record-keeping systems that Obama envisions for the whole nation. America will also be lacking the skilled workers necessary to build and implement the technology needed for the modernized health record. This month's hot topic survey asks our reader what part AHIMA should play in the development of the skilled labor pool that will be required to implement President Obama's plan.

Do you think AHIMA should:

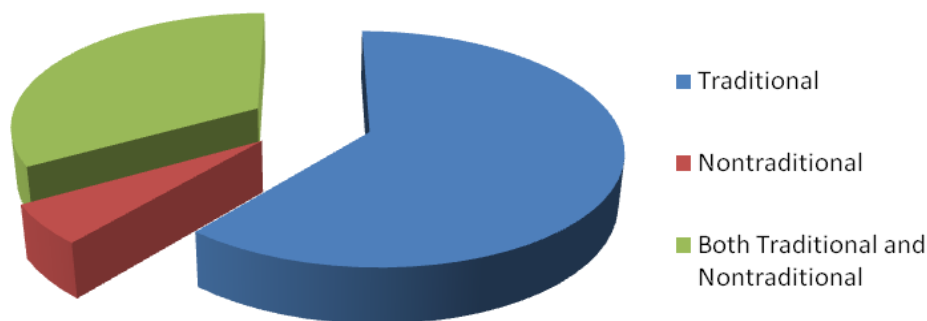
1. Develop a new curriculum & credential specifically for health IS/IT?
2. Expand the current curriculum/credentials already in place to include more health IS/IT ?
3. Both 1 & 2



[Click on the link to complete the survey:](#)

## January Hot Topics Survey Results

### January Hot Topic Survey-Educational Background



Thanks to everyone who took the January Hot Topics Survey! In January we asked our readers to share what type educational background they have and as the chart demonstrates, 63% of respondents indicated they had a traditional educational background, 33% said their background was both traditional and nontraditional and 4% indicated they had a nontraditional educational background.

We hope you enjoy participating in and reading the results of our Hot Topics Surveys.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### February

2/20	Deadline for MHIMA Board Nomination Submissions	<a href="#">Click Here to Nominate Online</a>
2/20	8:30-10:30 MHIMA Board Conference Call	Audio Conference

### March

3/6	Mid Missouri Meeting	<a href="#">Learn More and Register</a>
3/7	EHIMA Spring Fling	Information Coming Soon
3/20	9:00-10:30 MHIMA Board Conference Call	Audio Conference

### April

4/29-5/01	MHIMA Annual Meeting Lodge of the Four Seasons Lake of the Ozarks	<a href="#">Learn More</a>
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[Click here for Board contact information](#)

## MHIMA Board Directory

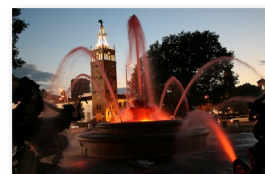
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