

2025

# AHIMA Advocacy Agenda



The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA®) mission of empowering people to impact health is rooted in our founder's belief that great possibilities are achieved when we work together towards a common goal. At AHIMA, our common goal is to transform health and healthcare by connecting people, systems, and ideas. This starts with health information because it is the most powerful currency for change in the healthcare ecosystem. The 2025 AHIMA Advocacy Agenda leverages our knowledge and expertise of health information to influence the public policy environment for the benefit of individuals, communities, and health information (HI) professionals.

## Our agenda promotes policies to:

1

**Ensure the Quality,  
Integrity, and Usability of  
Health Information**

2

**Improve Individuals'  
Health Journey through  
Access to Information,  
Protecting Privacy, and  
the Collection, Sharing,  
and Use of Social  
Determinants of Health**

3

**Advance Healthcare  
Transformation**

To advance our public policy agenda, AHIMA will work together with our members, the US Congress, the Trump-Vance Administration, national healthcare organizations, and other stakeholders.

# Ensure the Quality, Integrity, and Usability of Health Information

## Promote Access to Accurate, Timely, and Complete Information

**Timely access to quality information** is foundational to improving health outcomes and lowering the cost of healthcare because it is at the core of every patient encounter. Information must be complete, accurate, usable, standards-based, and timely; reflecting the scope of services provided and empowering stakeholders—including patients, providers, and payers—to make the best care decisions and the appropriate reimbursement.

Critical to maintaining data quality, integrity, and usability is the ability to **accurately match patients to their medical record**. A combination of technology, standards, operational processes, and trained health information professionals are currently used to optimize accurate patient identification. Working with the Patient ID Now Coalition, AHIMA led the introduction of the MATCH IT Act last Congress to improve patient matching and identification.

## Strengthen the Health Information Workforce

Ensuring the quality, integrity, and usability of health information also requires **strengthening the current and future HI workforce**. As healthcare becomes more data-driven, skills are needed to support data sharing, analytics, and data governance, including oversight of tools powered by artificial intelligence (AI), while maintaining the confidentiality, privacy, and security of individuals' health information. Such advancements will alter existing job functions, leading to increased specialization and require upskilling of existing and future workforce.

## Improved Oversight of Artificial Intelligence

AI tools have the potential to transform healthcare delivery and the workforce. AI is top of mind for many organizations as the industry continues to experience workforce shortages, staff turnover, and burnout. According to a recent AHIMA-NORC survey, two-thirds of HI professionals have reported understaffing at their organizations which has led to employee burnout, staff turnover, slower claims processing, and lower data quality.<sup>1</sup> That said, **improved oversight of AI** is needed as implementation and use of such tools raise questions around accuracy, transparency, governance, data provenance, potential harm, liability, and intellectual property rights. Prior congressional activities have focused on crafting a national AI framework to improve oversight.

### Where AHIMA Stands

Promote and advance the collection, use, and exchange of high-quality health information throughout the information lifecycle to support clinical decision-making, operational efficiencies, and appropriate reimbursement.

Advocate for accurate and reliable patient identification and matching to improve patient safety, information sharing, and reduce administrative burden.

### Where AHIMA Stands

Promote policies that ensure HI professionals meet the health information needs of today and tomorrow.

### Where AHIMA Stands

Advocate and influence policies that promote appropriate oversight and sufficient protections related to the implementation and use of AI, while encouraging innovative technological advancements and avoiding excessive burden for end-users.

<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://7932134.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/7932134/Whitepapers/Workforce-AI%20Study%20Final.pdf>

# Improve Individuals' Health Journey through Access to Information, Protecting Privacy, and the Collection, Sharing, and Use of Social Determinants of Health

Improving individuals' access to information, protecting privacy, and improving the collection, sharing and use of social determinants of health are fundamental to improving health outcomes and transforming healthcare.

## Improve Individuals' Access to Information

**Improving individuals' access to and use of their health information** is essential to engaging in decisions about their health and managing their care, reducing healthcare costs, and leading to better outcomes. Despite technological advances and federal regulations<sup>2</sup> that support timely and electronic access to their health information, individuals continue to struggle with accessing their health information.

Improving individuals' access to information includes **information about the cost of their healthcare services**, which can empower them to engage in decisions about their health and healthcare, including the ability to compare providers. Individuals also need such information to understand their health and financial responsibilities.

## Protect Individuals' Privacy

While the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) governs health privacy in traditional healthcare settings, an increasing number of consumer-facing technologies are not required to adhere to HIPAA because they are not considered covered entities or business associates. As a result, individuals using these technologies are not always afforded the same level of protections as under HIPAA, such as required notices of privacy practices, security standards, restrictions on the sale, use, and reuse of protected health information by third parties, and the individual right of access. Limited consumer education about the risks associated with such technologies has compounded these challenges. Recent legislative proposals have sought to address these gaps through a national privacy law.

## Improving the Collection, Sharing and Use of Social Determinants of Health

Addressing **social determinants of health** is critical to improving health outcomes. Healthcare delivery and financing models that incentivize the collection, sharing, and use of social determinants of health (SDOH) data offer an opportunity to address health-

### Where AHIMA Stands

Support individuals' electronic and timely access to their health information regardless of where it is captured, stored, or exchanged to help them manage their care and lead to better outcomes.

Promote individuals' access to timely, accurate, and actionable information to better understand the cost of their healthcare services, including out-of-pocket costs.

### Where AHIMA Stands

Address privacy and security gaps of consumer-facing tools and technologies that collect, access, use, disclose, and maintain electronic health information.

### Where AHIMA Stands

Advocate for the accurate and consistent collection, sharing, and use of social determinants of health data to improve health outcomes.

<sup>2</sup> Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, 21st Century Cures Act of 2016

related factors upstream from the clinical encounter that leads to such benefits as improved outcomes, better care, and reduced hospital readmissions. However, the collection, sharing, and use of SDOH data remains an operational challenge.

## Advance Healthcare Transformation

Evolving consumer expectations, advances in technology, and shifts to value-based payment and care models that rely on high-quality data and quality measures are driving transformation in healthcare today. To support healthcare transformation, public policy can pursue better information flows to advance improved payment and delivery models and drive efficiencies in healthcare.

### Pursue Better Information Flows

Healthcare decisions require information to be shared across settings and actors without unnecessary roadblocks and in ways that leverage standards that support real-world needs and maintain confidentiality, privacy, and security. Better information flows can be achieved by improved convergence of clinical and administrative data, enhancing information sharing, and improved integration of physical and behavioral health information.

**Improving convergence of clinical and administrative data**, including tools for automation, could bring significant benefits to the patient experience and decrease provider burden. In 2023, providers electronically submitted 4.4 billion claims, amounting to over 12 million claims per day.<sup>3</sup> However, processes that require the exchange of clinical data to support administrative processes often involve manual work, including phone calls, extensive staffing, use of payer portals, and faxes. Policy changes to address these issues must consider the real-world experiences of end-users in implementing such technologies.

**Improving information sharing** could yield considerable benefits including reducing administrative burden, fostering faster clinical decision-making, improving patient safety, and reducing healthcare costs. The US Congress sought to improve information sharing in the bipartisan 21st Century Cures Act of 2016 by enabling the secure exchange of electronic health information without special effort and penalizing instances of information blocking by providers, health IT developers, health information exchanges, and health information networks. The Cures Act also called for the establishment of the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA) to enhance nationwide data exchange. Improved information sharing must also be accompanied by strong security measures.

#### Where AHIMA Stands

Enhance and influence efforts to better integrate clinical and administrative data to improve the patient experience, ease clinician burden, and reduce healthcare costs.

Champion a healthcare ecosystem that fosters information sharing to enable all healthcare stakeholders, including patients, to make more informed care decisions.

Encourage policies that improve integration of behavioral health information with physical health information while recognizing individuals' privacy preferences.

<sup>3</sup> Available at: [https://www.caqh.org/hubfs/43908627/drupal/2024-01/2023\\_CAOH\\_Index\\_Report.pdf](https://www.caqh.org/hubfs/43908627/drupal/2024-01/2023_CAOH_Index_Report.pdf).

The ongoing opioid epidemic and behavioral health crisis also highlights the need to **improve integration of behavioral health information with physical health information** and improve public health reporting. The sensitive nature of records pertaining to behavioral health and substance use disorders creates challenges that hinder the ability to coordinate high-quality and safe care for patients. Lack of alignment across regulatory requirements and technical solutions to support granular segmentation of patient data creates burdens for stakeholders, including patients, that are incongruous with care delivery models that rely on providers' ability to share health information. Public health information systems must also be modernized to advance population health.

### **Improve Payment and Delivery Models**

Shifts in **payment and care delivery models**, including increased use of telehealth, have contributed to advancing healthcare transformation. Participation in value-based care models presents an opportunity to reap the benefits that tie reimbursement to performance while containing healthcare costs. Value-based care models also create opportunities to deliver more personalized care to individuals and communities. These models rely on accurate health information to assess and prioritize high-value care.

#### **Where AHIMA Stands**

[Champion payment and delivery models that leverage accurate, timely, and complete health information and technology in new and innovative ways.](#)

Transforming health and healthcare will not happen overnight. However, we cannot underestimate the power of health information to achieve this goal. Engaging in public policy and advocacy is an opportunity for health information professionals to share their knowledge and expertise about how health information can empower individuals and communities to impact health.

**Please visit <https://www.ahima.org/advocacy/advocacy/> to get involved and learn more about the AHIMA 2025 Advocacy Agenda.**