HIM-Interchange

Letter from the Editor

Jennie Shepheard

Dear *HIM-Interchange* readers

The theme for this issue is *Managing staff; Change management; Clinical coder in-house training; Professional development!* There are some very big topics in this theme and while our contributions in this issue deal with some aspects of these, they don't cover the full spectrum of health information management endeavour. Our guest editors Claire Pierce and Kate Horkings discuss management of clinical coding teams (Pierce and Horkings, 2016), while Lyn Williams (Williams, 2016), and Susan Claesson and Anne Elsworthy (Claesson and Elsworthy, 2016) cover changes to clinical coder training. However, contributions from hospital-based Clinical Coders (CCs) seem to be difficult to attract. Having worked in several different clinical coding roles I know there are challenges, along with many innovative solutions to meeting deadlines, optimising DRG outcomes, and managing a largely female and part-time workforce. What do you think about the online education offered by the ACCD? If you have a unit of competency in clinical coding will you consider upgrading to a Certificate IV? We would love to hear from you. I hope some of you will be inspired to put pen to paper and respond to the ideas discussed by our authors in this Issue.

Health information management is about a lot more than clinical coding of course. Many of you work in clinical registries, clinical trial management, epidemiology, government departments and the more traditional hospital-based roles, where managing major projects seems to have become an art form - we would love to hear from you all as well. How do you manage staff in a major project where decisions are being made everyday and where you need to rely heavily on a team because you cannot make every decision yourself? What are the "tricks of the trade" for project management? Tracey Formosa (Formosa, 2016) gives us just a hint in this Issue, and Alicia Cook (Cook, 2016) encourages us all to be brave about taking on new challenges. I also urge you to be brave about making a contribution to your professional practice journal. There are many mentors who would be willing to help and the benefit of having a mentor could go way beyond helping you to write an article. Read what James Muller (Muller, 2016) and our guest editors (Pierce and Horkings, 2016) have to say about mentoring; this might encourage you to find yourself

a mentor or volunteer to provide some mentoring to a colleague, staff member or student.

The *HIM-Interchange* subcommittee has been discussing the value of having a theme for each issue of *HIM-Interchange*. Having a theme has been both a blessing and a curse. It has been a blessing because it focuses our energy for sourcing articles from relevant organisations and people, but a curse when we cannot source enough articles and we end up filling the issue with other articles, not on theme but very useful and interesting for you, our readers. Having a theme for each issue can be misleading for researchers and educators, who may be looking for articles on particular topics and expect them to be in the relevant themed issue when in fact most issues contain articles on various topics. For these reasons we are planning to change our themes to a generic list, which will be the same for every issue and which will cover the full range of competencies articulated in HIMAA's Health Information Manager (HIM) Entry-Level Competency Standards, January 2013[1]. The *HIM-Interchange* subcommittee would be very interested to hear your opinion about this change, which we plan to implement in 2017.

Meanwhile in this Issue I hope you will enjoy our guest editorial where Claire and Kate (Pierce and Horkings, 2016) reflect on the meaning of management and leadership and share some innovative ideas about self-managed clinical coding teams at Monash Health. Claire and Kate reference several articles in this Issue and I will leave you to read the guest editorial and be inspired to keep reading. However, I do have to share that I found Tracy Formosa's (Formosa, 2016) description of network drives as "unstructured and uncontrolled environments" absolutely "spot on". Haven't we all filed a document in a safe place only to spend valuable minutes searching for it just a few weeks later? Thank you, Tracy, for making me understand that there may be a solution.

Finally, a word of thanks to Angela Randall (Randall, 2016), who, from all the way on the other side of the world, remembered us and volunteered a report on her attendance and paper presentation at the Barbados combined health information management and radiographers conference. Angela is working in Ireland and we are grateful that she has not forgotten us! Thank you also to Cathy Balding (Balding, 2016), who reliably contributes *The Quality Conversation* for each issue of our journal. Cathy's discussion of the failure of clinical governance at Djerriwarrh Health Service gives us all pause for thought.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *HIM-Interchange* and remember I'd love to hear from you!

References

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1 http://himaa2.org.au/sites/default/files/HIMAA_HIM_Entry_Level_Competencies_Version_2_January_2013_0.pdf