



**Information™**  
**For A Healthy Nation**

# Quality Data for a Healthy Nation

by Mary H. Stanfill, RHIA, CCS, CCS-P

**Health Information and  
Technology Week**

November 6–12, 2005

SPONSORED BY

**AHIMA**  
American Health Information  
Management Association®

**CHIMA** Healthcare  
Professionals  
for the  
Information Age  
Canadian Health Information Management Association  
Canadian College of Health Record Administrators

# What Is Healthcare Data?

- Raw facts generated in the process of patient care
- Can be clinical, financial, or demographic
- Multiple forms, formats, and sources
- Generally stored as characters, words, symbols, measurements, or statistics
- Processed to provide healthcare information

# **Data Quality**

can be defined as the assurance of the accuracy and timeliness of healthcare information.

# Uses of Healthcare Data

- Healthcare clinical decision-making, research, and treatment development
- Public health and pandemic pattern detection
- Management and policy decision-making such as actuarial premium setting, cost analysis, and service reimbursement
- Business planning, accreditation, quality assurance, billing and reimbursement (revenue cycle), and compliance and risk management

Quality Clinical Records  
= Quality Care

# Characteristics of Data Quality

- *Accuracy*: free of errors
- *Accessibility*: easily obtainable
- *Consistency*: recorded consistently to prevent misinterpretation or ambiguity

# Data Characteristics (continued)

- *Currency and Timeliness*: data should be up to date and recorded at or near the time of the event or observation
- *Comprehensiveness*: all the required data elements are captured
- *Definition*: Users of the data must understand what the data mean and represent

# Data Characteristics (continued)

- *Relevancy*: relevant to the purpose for which it is collected
- *Granularity*: Collected at the appropriate level of specificity
- *Precision*: measurements are close to the actual size, weight, etc.



# Threats to Data Quality

- Design flaws
- Methods for data collection
- Technical errors
- Interpretation differences
- Interfaces, transferring data from one system to another

# Barriers to Data Quality

- Poor documentation practices
- Outdated coding classification system in the US
- Lack of data sets and data standards
- Inconsistencies in reporting requirements

# Common Mechanisms to Ensure Data Quality

- Audit and monitoring activities
- Database, data warehouse design
- Organizational data dictionary
- System design including testing and initial evaluation
- Maintenance and ongoing evaluation

# Data Quality Is No Accident

Ask not what your data can do for you,  
but what you can do for your data.

# Data Quality Management

- Identify and resolve data quality issues
- Routinely monitor and assess quality
- Provide preventive maintenance
- Support data users
- Facilitate good data management

# Examples of DQM Efforts

- Clinical documentation improvement programs
- Assessment of clinical coding accuracy
- Master Patient Index integrity

Data Quality has an impact  
both **internally**  
and **externally**

Quality Data



Accurate, Timely Information



Knowledge for a Healthy Nation



# This is Health Information and Technology Week

November 6-12, 2005

# HIM Vision

HIM is the body of knowledge and practice that ensures the availability of health information to facilitate real-time healthcare delivery and critical health-related decision making for multiple purposes across diverse organizations, settings, and disciplines.

# Information Management Is Critical to achieve Data quality

The need for more and better data requires a concentrated movement toward processes that place value on how data is defined, understood, analyzed, and interpreted.



**Information™**  
**For A Healthy Nation**

# Questions?

**Health Information and  
Technology Week**

November 6–12, 2005

SPONSORED BY

**AHIMA**  
American Health Information  
Management Association®

**CHIMA** Healthcare  
Professionals  
for the  
Information Age  
Canadian Health Information Management Association  
Canadian College of Health Record Administrators