

AHIMA Advantage

Prepare Now for Coming HIPAA Security Reviews
Author Q&A: William Miaoulis, CISA, CISM

Recent changes in the enforcement of the HIPAA security rule have lead many healthcare organizations to re-evaluate their compliance with the federal law. In his [new book](#), *Preparing for a HIPAA Security Compliance Assessment*, seasoned HIPAA security and privacy consultant William Miaoulis, CISA, CISM, discusses how HIM professionals can ensure their organization passes a HIPAA security audit and adequately secures patients' information. *AHIMA Advantage* recently spoke with Miaoulis about security reviews.

Q: What is the premise of *Preparing for a HIPAA Security Compliance Assessment*?

A: The book provides organizations and individuals with the information they need to understand HIPAA security and the steps to reach HIPAA compliance. I believe the book eliminates some of the mystery of what it means to be HIPAA security compliant and will assist organizations prepare in the event they are subject to a compliance review. The book also provides information that an organization can use to document and evaluate their current HIPAA/HITECH security compliance state.

Q: Did you discover anything unexpected or surprising about this topic during the writing process?

A: The one topic that surprises me the most is the number of individuals and organizations that do not understand the basics of risk analysis. We all practice risk analysis everyday; we just do not know it. This book explains in simple terms how to conduct a “documented risk analysis,” which is the foundation of the HIPAA security rule, required by meaningful use, and is fundamental to an effective information security program.

Q: What kind of HIM professionals should read this book?

A: Any HIM professional that is concerned with the protection and confidentiality of patient information should read this book. The book provides a way for the non-information technology (IT) individual to gain an understanding of how an organization can reach HIPAA security compliance. Any HIM professional who reads the book will be better equipped to have HIPAA security discussions with IT security and management personnel.

Q: Why did you write this book? What do you personally find interesting about the topic?

A: Even though HIPAA has been out for a long time, organizations and individuals still do not understand what it means to be HIPAA compliant. In fact the words HIPAA and HITECH can

cause concern and fear among individuals responsible for the security and confidentiality of information.

I believe that when non-security individuals (HIM professionals) understand and become involved with security, the organization's security over patient information is enhanced. You do not need to know how to implement encrypted laptops, but as a stakeholder you can know why you need it. This book tries to address what is needed to be HIPAA security compliant without the reader needing to understand all of the technical jargon.

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