

Closing Keynote, Dubai, UAE,

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I was honored to be asked to do the closing keynote at the IFHIMA 2019 Congress in Dubai. I've been around at IFHIMA meetings for a long time—my first was in Toronto in 1976! I was privileged to be President at the 2010 Congress in Montreal and remained active in the association and profession for 45 years now. I recognized two long time professionals as I started my talk, Carol Lewis from the US who attended the Second Congress, held in Washington DC in 1956 and Phyllis Watson from Australia who started attending in 1968 in Stockholm, Sweden, and has not missed one since!

For the closing keynote Congress in Dubai, I was asked to talk about the Past, the Present and the Future in HIM. Well, talking about the past was easy as I lived it and have worked in the profession since 1974. Talking about the present is also easy, as I'm still working in a consulting role for several hospitals in the Chicago area in the US and have a team of HIM professionals working with me in the area of coding in the inpatient and ambulatory surgery center settings, and in physician education on documentation and CDI (Clinical Documentation Improvement). Our profession is wide in scope and there are many niches that need HIM professionals.

Dubai was an amazing place. The day after I landed, I felt as if I had flown into the future. It took me 3 days there to comprehend that they do NOT have a postal system. Everything is electronic—catalogs, bills, correspondence, thank you notes, holiday or birthday greetings. That will probably happen around the world in the next years.

I did a little review of the past—the beginnings of IFHRO in 1952 in London, through the name change to IFHIMA, and now being for the first time in the UAE in Dubai in 2019. The delegates did vote on the final day this year, that in 3 years we will be in Australia, in 2022. IFHIMA Congresses have been held in Canada and the US, Europe, Asia, and Australia. I spoke of all the paper in the profession when I started working in 1974—paper everything—medical records, filing systems, using a Rolodex. Physicians were not happy about completing their charts and having to come to the Medical Record Department to do it. I referenced the 80's and 90's when the movement to computerization started. There was a name

change in the profession in many countries from a Medical Record Association to a Health Information Management profession. Physicians still had to deal with incomplete records however, whatever the format. From 2000 to today, we have moved from ICD-9 to ICD-10 and now ICD-11 is on the horizon. The focus is STILL and should be on Data Quality.

IFHIMA is a different organization than it was now with a web site, a robust Global newsletter, and with an important White Paper published and more underway. Updated Educational Materials sit in the Learning Center of the web site, and the organization continues to be an Association of very dedicated volunteers.

Talking about the future was harder—there will not be much paper and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will change everything. My hope for the future is that HIM is a more recognized profession than it was when I entered the field, or where it is now. We are challenged by what awaits the HIM future but know that the focus is on Quality Coded Data and Quality Health Information. Advanced Analytics and AI will improve decision making across business processes. Coding will be automated. Analytics Translators will be needed in all disciplines. Our profession will continue to need professionals with more technical fluency and project management skills. Disintermediation, which is removing the middleman, will occur in our field and others. This process lowers costs and allows all transactions to proceed more directly. This will have huge impact on coding, analysis, and quality management.

We will need HIM curriculums to change to meet the needs of the future. We will need to know data analytics, how to work in the cloud, and how to identify business process improvement. Our future is digital for sure. We will need skilled HIM professionals at the Associate, Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral levels of the profession. There will be better mining of medical record data that will help physicians make accurate decisions faster. AI will find nonspecific codes and areas in the documentation that need improvement. It will find copy/paste text and abnormal lab values, as well as potential medication interactions. There will be computer assisted coding (CAC) with increased accuracy and productivity.

In closing I shared some of my favorite sayings and expressions throughout the years---connect with the ones below that resonate with you.

Just because everyone else thinks it's a good idea, you don't have to.

Have patience in your moments of indecision.

You learn more from listening than from talking.

Listen and learn something every single day.

Leadership is not always about being in charge, it is about taking care of people in your charge.

The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.

Like your work or do something else-----it will show.

And my favorite-----Always stop to catch your breath and never forget the moments that take your breath away.

