REPORT OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REGION TO IMIA (COACH AND AMIA)

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For four decades COACH has worked to meet the needs of its growing membership, which now includes over 2,000 members. The membership is broad, including professionals from all areas of healthcare, students, informatics researchers, thought leaders and practitioners at all levels. COACH has continued to maintain a global and holistic perspective on the field of health informatics and digital health and works to connect, inspire and educate health professionals who are shaping the future of health in Canada. The organization aims to catalyze the digital health community and incubate knowledge by demonstrating leadership in health informatics, supporting collaboration through sharing of health informatics and digital health knowledge and experience, remaining committed to continuous learning, being guided by professionalism and ethics and responding to the emerging needs of its members and the health system.

Conferences and Events

The National eHealth COACH conference, eHealth2016: Reimagining Healthcare Delivery, was held in Vancouver from June 5 to June 8, 2016 and had over 1,500 delegates attending over 150 education sessions. Topics included consumer health, privacy standards, analytics, data governance, e-prescribing, telehealth, clinical satisfaction and more.

eHealth 2017: The Future of Digital Health and the People Who Benefit, was held in Toronto from June 4 to June 7, 2017 and focused on the past, current, and future state of Canada’s digital health community. The conference had over 1,500 attendees with 8 keynote speakers, over 250 educational sessions and over 85 exhibitors (with a “Start Up Zone” made available for new companies). The fourth annual Hackathon at the conference focused on “Hacking Mental Health in the Workplace”. The Canadian Health Informatics (CHIA) Gala also celebrated thought leaders, innovative industry leaders and emerging health informatics professionals.

Canada’s Health Informatics Executive Forum (CHIEF) Fall Symposium took place September 30th and October 1st, 2016. The 2016 CHIEF Fall Symposium featured a two-day program for over 70 senior Health Informatics executives from across Canada to gather together to learn, collaborate, and network. The Fall CHIEF Symposium agenda and break-out discussions were focused on innovation, leadership, and national advocacy.

eHealthAchieve 2016 took place in Toronto on November 7 and 8 and had the theme of “Healthcare Innovations: Enablers, Challenges and Gaps” The keynotes included Don Tapscott, a well known business executive, author, consultant and speaker, who specializes in the role of technology in business and society and William Charnetski, who is Ontario’s chief health
innovation strategist. Presentations covered topics such as the Internet of Things in Health, Cloud Computing and Data Analytics.

*Webinar Wednesdays* continued to provide an online and convenient way for health professionals to keep up with emerging issues, trends and ideas in health informatics and digital health. The topics have varied, including telehealth, standards, privacy and security, data quality, patient centered care, consumer health informatics, and other timely and important areas aimed to keep attendees up to date with.

*COACH/ANHIX 2017 Conference* – Alberta’s Clinical Information System: The New Frontier was held on February 8, 2017 in Calgary Alberta and featured public and private sector leaders who shared their vision for the provincial Clinical Information System. It had over 130 attendees who discussed integrated health records, precision medicine, and digital health leadership.

*UPONDIGITAL: The Ontario Update on Digital Health 2017* took place in Toronto on March 6, 2017 and featured speakers discussing the innovation agenda from the public sector and government perspective. Challenges and opportunities in innovation in Ontario were discussed. Public and private sector leaders from across the province participated in the discussions. Over 130 attendees participate in the event.

*Ahead of the Curve: Patient Engagement and Connected Care* took place at TELUS Garden in Vancouver on March 27, 2017. At this breakfast session, thought leaders shared perspectives and led discussion on engaging patients in their care with emerging technologies and innovative care models with 40 engaged participants.

Canada’s Health Informatics Executive Forum (CHIEF) Spring Symposium took place in Toronto on June 2-3, 2017. More than 70 CHIEFs met to build trusted relationships, collaborate on finding solutions for the issue facing healthcare today, and discuss the future of digital health in Canada. Sessions included pan-Canadian CIO panel and leadership discussion, advice to Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on development of provincial data and analytics strategy, and break-out groups developing guidelines for consumer digital health.

**New and Updated Publications**

A number of new and updated COACH publications were released over the last year. This included a new report released in November 2016 entitled *National Digital Health Leadership Report: A Current State Snapshot*. To develop this report COACH consulted with digital health leaders. COACH CEO Mark Casselman states that “Our report brings forward what is happening now across Canada, and will help inform a roadmap for health system transformation going forward”.

The popular and well subscribed COACH set of guidelines was updated in the publication *Putting It Into Practice – Privacy and Security for Healthcare Providers Implementing Electronic Medical Records Special Edition V3*. This resource has helped to increase awareness and understanding of privacy and security and been important source of information for institutional decision making. This publication continues to be available from the COACH store as an eBook and also as a hard-copy book.
Standards

COACH continues to actively participate in the development of international standards for health information. This work has helped in a number of electronic health record initiatives in Canada and worldwide. This has included work by COACH members with the ISO Technical Committee on Health Informatics (TC 215), HL7 and SNOMED International.

Programs, Services and Resources

COACH continues to offer a wide array of programs, services and resources. This has included both individual and institutional membership opportunities, and membership identities for subgroups such as Canadian Telehealth, Emerging Health Informatics Professionals and COACH clinician. In addition, CHIEF (Canada’s Health Informatics Executives Forum) continues to provide a channel to thought leaders and expert-level knowledge. Also, in addition to Canada’s National eHealth Conference (which is co-hosted by COACH, Canada Health Infoway and the Canadian Institute for Health Information), symposiums with COACH and partner provincial jurisdictions have included the following: the Alberta Network for Health Information Exchange (ANHIX) Symposium, the Ontario HIMSS ONUP conference, the BC Health Information Management Professionals Society and the Ontario Hospital Association eHealthAchieve.

In terms of education and training COACH continues to offer CPHIMS-CA preparation courses, health informatics workshops and webinars. COACH has also continued to work closely with the academic programs at universities and colleges across Canada. Work that continues to be influential includes the CPHIMS-CA Certification, the HIP® Competency framework, HIP® core competencies (which have been used to guide curricula in health informatics throughout Canada and internationally), HIP® career matrix, HIP® role profiles and the Interactive HIP® Career Matrix. COACH has also continued to support a variety of communities of action and provide a wide range of key documents, guidelines and white papers. These include Guidelines for the Protection of Health Information, Privacy & Security Special Edition, eSafety Guidelines, Health Informatics Human Resources Guidelines, HI Education Report, Canadian Telehealth Report, EHR Adoption White Paper, Journals, HICSS and the IMIA Yearbook.

COACH 2017-2020 Strategic Plan

The COACH 2017-2020 Strategic Plan was released and focuses on several key objectives:

- Enhance Membership Value Through Network Growth and Connections
  - Processes will be implemented to grow and diversify membership and engage new membership segments, providing a unique and valuable member experience through new programs and services.
- Connect Communities (Digital and Physical)
  - The digital health market will be accessed annually to identify new regional and local opportunities in bringing together ideas from COACH stakeholder segments for incubation and advocacy.
- Empower Professional Development and Advocacy
- Member engagement protocols will be developed to deliver on professional development needs and develop awareness of CPHIMS-CA and advocate for health informatics body of knowledge (HIBOK) as key enabler for digital health.

- Implement Digital Business Platform
  - A platform will be implemented that supports members and delivers differentiated member experience through personalized, convenient and professionally relevant interactions (website, mobile and in-person).

- Build Brand Awareness and Brand Value
  - A plan will be developed and implemented for re-examination of identity, branding and marketing and strengthening brand awareness in the market through regular engagement campaigns, market awareness and creating strategic approaches to identifying co-branding opportunities.

In summary, the next 3 years will see COACH focusing on continued growth, expanded education, new partnerships, enhanced volunteer engagement, identification of new opportunities and more local events to drive member engagement and non-member awareness.

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AMIA – Informatics Professionals. Leading the Way.

AMIA represents more than 5,400 healthcare professionals, students, informatics researchers, practitioners, and thought-leaders in biomedicine, healthcare, and science. AMIA’s members are subject matter experts in the science and practice of informatics as it relates to clinical care, research, education, and policy. They address challenges across the continuum of the health ecosystem—consumers and patients, healthcare providers and care delivery systems, population and public health, and basic and clinical research. AMIA members discover health insights and accelerate the transformation of healthcare to advance better health, enhance healthcare quality, and improve efficiency through informatics and information technology.

Continuing Concerns with Developments in Our Field

As we reported last year, the AMIA Board of Directors has taken steps to address a concerning development to our field. The issue is about defining what health informatics is and who leads the development of certification in health informatics. We work in a vibrant, interdisciplinary field, maximizing the synergy between health informatics, health information technology and health information management. Each competency is a valued and necessary part of our complex web of professional healthcare roles.

AMIA remains alert regarding organizations that intentionally seek to blur the professional lines between the professions. Certification in health informatics is a process that should be defined and led by informaticians – informatics researchers, educators, and professionals.

The AMIA Board conveyed concerns to the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) when we received an announcement regarding AHIMA’s development of certification activities in “health informatics,” as well as their strategic plan to “lead in informatics and analytics.” Our concerns were not addressed and they proceeded anyway.

IMIA Member Societies Need to Remain Vigilant

AMIA encourages you to share information and discuss this in your own member societies so we, as a global community, remain vigilant in protecting the field. There was a recent staff leadership change at AHIMA, but their public profile, the mission and vision related to health informatics, remains the same. Unless this changes, we must assume that AHIMA will continue to pursue pathways to gain recognition as the association of choice for informatics professionals, a decision that is incompatible with the professional credibility established by AMIA and other IMIA member societies.
We believe that IMIA’s member societies should be aware of these developments and understand AHIMA’s strategy that is designed to conflate and confuse the identities between the health informatics and health information management professions.

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