

## Three Rights Equal Value

### ***A Success Formula***

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Value, as it relates to health care, emphasizes providing the right care, at the right time, and in the right place to produce cost-effective best outcome practices. Measuring value by capturing data that accurately and reliably reflects quality and cost outcomes is key as hospitals and physicians transition from volume to value-based care.

Information governance (IG) of clinical and operational information is a strategic asset in facilitating this movement. More importantly, adopting an IG framework in a data-driven organization improves your ability to hit the Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s (IHI) Triple Aim for enhancing quality of care, improving population health, and reducing costs.

Three critical requirements in developing an IG framework include establishing a team, defining key performance indicators (KPIs) by roles, and implementing a protocol. This article details how to go about putting in place these key components and outlines a roadmap for achieving a sustainable IG initiative

### **Proven Game Changers**

Healthcare organizations today struggle to remain viable given various challenges that are proven game changers in the healthcare landscape. For example, due to the rising costs related to caring for chronic conditions, many healthcare organizations are having to focus on prevention instead of the traditional practice of intervention. Furthermore, since October 1, 2012, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA) requires the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to reduce Medicare payments for excessive readmissions within 30 days of discharge.<sup>1</sup> This year, *Becker’s Hospital Review* ran an article stating that more than 2,600 or 45 percent of all hospitals will lose Medicare payments in 2015 due to excessive readmissions.<sup>2,3</sup> To monitor chronically ill patients and the number of readmissions within a 30-day period, ongoing data collection and reporting capabilities are crucial to developing a sound population health management strategy.

A strong care coordination infrastructure is also critical to achieving IHI’s Triple Aim. The Triple Aim’s goals are to improve patient experience in terms of quality and satisfaction, improve population health, and reduce healthcare costs.<sup>4</sup> A strong, systematic approach to care coordination requires patient information that is seamlessly accessible and available in a timely manner to provide well-coordinated and highly efficient patient care. Healthcare organization leaders are challenged to ensure patient information is readily available to providers at the right time and right place, every time.

Another challenge faced by many providers today is vulnerability to data theft. Health data is known to be the longest-living asset for healthcare organizations, and, therefore, it is a prime target for hackers. Since the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Breach Notification Rule was issued,<sup>5</sup> the alarming number of data breaches reported by healthcare organizations demonstrates the significant value of employee and patient data. It is imperative for healthcare organizations to implement data breach detection and prevention strategies.

### **What is Information Governance?**

IG is an organization-wide framework for managing information throughout its lifecycle and supporting the organization’s strategic, operational, regulatory, legal, risk, and environmental requirements.<sup>6</sup> According to the American Health Information Management Association’s (AHIMA’s) Information Governance Principles for Healthcare (IGPHC),<sup>TM</sup> governance of clinical and operational information:

- Improves quality of care and patient safety
- Improves population health

- Increases operational efficiency and effectiveness
- Reduces costs
- Reduces risk<sup>6</sup>

The development of a successful framework drives effective care coordination, manages organizational change, and creates measurements of success.

### Three-Stage Roadmap

An IG framework requires a three-stage process that includes establishing a team, identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) based on defined IG goals, and implementing protocol.

**Stage 1:** Start by identifying data issues, causes and effects, and resolutions. Then, develop an IG framework that outlines a successful data management process integrating the organization's values and business goals. Four key principles of health data should guide the framework. They include:

- Health data is a valuable asset
- Quality outcomes are the ultimate goal of an effective IG program
- IG is a hybrid of management and IT
- Flexibility is key to developing a successful IG framework

Develop teams based on the size of your organization and the intricacy of your framework design. Ideally, two teams will lead the IG program: one at the enterprise level to govern data and one at the local level to manage data. The enterprise level should focus on objectives from the organization perspective. For example, objectives may include compliance to federal regulations, data warehousing, security and privacy, interoperable systems, return on investment (ROI), etc. At the local level, team members should represent various departments/specialties to address top priorities and implement protocols. Delegate roles and responsibilities after you construct and design your IG framework, thereby incorporating only necessary individuals.

**Stage 2:** Develop KPIs to quantify activities or processes required to achieve IG program goals effectively. KPIs must be:

- Defined in common terms,
- Easy to collect and interpret, show trends, and support benchmarking
- Malleable to changing priorities
- Balanced with objective and subjective measures

For example, inpatient KPIs will include your inpatient raw mortality rate, CMS core measures, readmission rate, average length of stay, occupancy rate, and patient satisfaction.<sup>8</sup> Inpatient KPI collection should be automated and easily translated to measurement reports and scorecards that track progress of specific department objectives and organization goals. Finally, inpatient KPIs should change over time and reflect measures of current relevance to the organization or system in general.

**Stage 3:** Protocol implementation requires an initial development of objectives and criteria. Objectives of your IG program include:

- Define the significance of governance as it relates to your organization and business objectives/strategy
- Identify constraints and opportunities inside and outside the organization
- Create a plan with key deliverables, time frames, lists of resources required, and expected ROI

Criteria should identify key stakeholders, organization acceptance of the proposed framework, a communication plan to overcome barriers, and mapping of related projects to identify overlaps.

## Case Study Analysis

AHIMA published a case study analysis of IG program initiatives in April 2014. The following two case studies are examples of existing IG programs in the U.S. healthcare system.<sup>9</sup> These cases reflect the three-stage roadmap strategy for developing an IG program framework.

**Case 1: Organization A.** One of the largest integrated delivery systems in the US, with both inpatient and ambulatory services, this system manages more than 100 hospitals, 50,000 providers, and over 5 million patient visits each year.

Prior to implementing a model, the system was in a state of decentralized data and analyses and insufficient care coordination. Patient experiences were inconsistent across the organization.

The primary motive for implementing an IG framework was to access patient information and provide the right care at the right time, regardless of which hospital or clinic a patient visited. Other reasons included the need to improve patient outcomes by analyzing patient information and the ability to monitor physician productivity.

Two teams were developed to lead the IG program: at the enterprise level—led by the director of quality—a data council whose main focus included patient information access, security, information design and capture, and data warehouse management; and at the local level, consortia consisting of department members inclusive of business, clinical patient care, information systems, privacy/security, and nursing.

KPI development was a collaborative effort between the consortia and data council with a key focus on the overall goals of the IG program: improved care coordination, improved patient outcomes across the health system and centralized data within the health system.

This hybrid model consisted of the data council (enterprise level) and department consortia (local level). Collectively, the teams developed a roadmap strategy to organize goals, evaluate the time frame, delegate tasks and monitor progress. For example, one action area included system-wide information interoperability. Working groups were also created to design and manage data.

**Case 2: Organization B.** An integrated delivery system with four hospitals, over 48 ambulatory clinics, and more than 1,500 affiliated providers, this organization is a leading model for the implementation of their electronic health records (EHR) across the system, allowing for ease in care coordination between hospitals and physicians.

Prior to implementing the IG program, each hospital operated in a silo, leading to inconsistencies, long wait times for requests, and discrepancies in quality reporting. Physicians were disgruntled about the mass of EHR information that muddled care delivery.

The drive for an IG program emanated from the need for seamless care coordination throughout the system. Other key drivers included patient safety, data integrity within the EHR and documentation processes.

Initiating the IG program ensured that requirements for reporting core measures and quality were met. The system's president/CEO led the IG program from the enterprise level, and the CIO, Chief Quality Officer (CQO), and chief privacy officer (CPO) managed the program. At the local level, physician and nurse working groups were established. Due to the number of facilities and varied workflow models and operations, physicians led the movement to synchronize efforts at each location. Key physician working group tasks included evaluation and standardization of EHR templates and quality reporting, while nurse working groups focused on patient safety. A health information management (HIM) team focused on IG policy compliance.

Overall goals of the IG program included redesign of patient information templates, assurance of integrity of data, patient safety and efficient care coordination. Physicians and nurses led these efforts to ensure standardization across the entire system.

Upon identifying the overall goals and framework for the IG program, the CIO and CPO played critical roles in engaging key stakeholders. In addition, efforts from all levels of the organization were critical to success. Although the organization faced challenges, staff worked through them and this encouraged comradery and proactive patient care.

### **Key Case Findings**

In these two case studies, the IG frameworks followed the three-stage roadmap strategy. Key findings are described in the Table.

**TABLE. Case Study IG Framework<sup>s</sup>**

Organization	Established Team	Goals/KPI Development	Protocol
A	<p><b>Team 1:</b> Data council led by director of quality at enterprise level</p> <p><b>Team 2:</b> Consortia at local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved coordination of care</li> <li>• Improved patient outcomes</li> <li>• Measurement of performance (physician productivity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design roadmap strategy for information interoperability</li> <li>• Working groups developed to design and manage data</li> <li>• Consortia and data council responsible for key aspects of information management</li> </ul>
B	<p><b>Team 1:</b> Enterprise level: CEO,</p> <p><b>Team 2:</b> Local level: CIO, CPO, CQO,</p> <p>Working Groups: physician led team, nurse led team, HIM team, quality team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care coordination</li> <li>• Improved integrity of data</li> <li>• Patient safety</li> <li>• Documentation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIO, CQO, and CPO essential to managing the program</li> <li>• Given 1,500 providers, physician-led IG program</li> <li>• Working groups focus on aspects such as quality for pay-for-performance, patient safety, etc.</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> KPI = key performance indicator, CEO = chief executive officer, CIO = chief information officer, CQO = chief quality officer, CPO = chief privacy officer, IG = information governance.

### Key Takeaways

As the healthcare landscape evolves toward value-based care and data-driven care delivery models, a viable IG framework is critical for success. Adopting IG frameworks improves your organization's ability to achieve IHI's Triple Aim. IG initiatives can improve patient outcomes, bridge gaps in care coordination, prevent data security breaches, and measure performance. The three-stage roadmap strategy to achieving a sustainable IG framework includes establishing a team, defining KPIs, and implementing protocol. Key components for the foundation of an IG model are the management, collection, storage, and preservation of data.

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