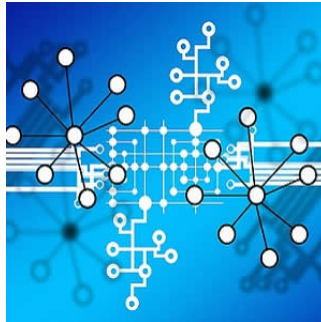

Data management: the year ahead



For 2018 privacy and security will continue to be priority areas when it comes to health data management. Moreover, informatics, data analytics, and clinical documentation improvement (CDI) are amongst the imperatives that will dominate data trends this year, according to the American Health Information Management Association.

1. Data analytics

Demand for services and projects will increase in 2018, AHIMA predicts. Data analysts are expected to be busy helping providers participate in new payment models and find their way through new policy initiatives such as MACRA.

2. Informatics

AHIMA sees "improved" electronic health records will help mitigate physician burnout. This can be achieved as data experts streamline processes to capture data in EHRs, protect patient-generated data in mobile apps and develop interfaces and dashboards for telehealth services.

3. Privacy and security

A number of policies related to data security are expected this year, such as the issuing of "minimum necessary" requirements, guidance around mental health information and data sharing as required by proposed rules of both the 21st Century Cures Act and the penalty sharing provision of the HITECH Act.

4. Clinical documentation

CDI specialists will also continue to be deeply involved with claims denials in 2018, helping to identify denials for coding and documentation that should be appealed as well as continue to expand to new and speciality areas of healthcare such as long-term care, home health, psychiatric units and rehab facilities that call for high-quality documentation, AHIMA says.

5. Information governance

Experts say enterprise-wide retention policies and data quality will continue to cause cybersecurity challenges for providers in 2018, demonstrating the strong need for IG programs to address them.

6. Government & policy

Federal rules and regulations will also be worth paying close attention to this year. Four big issues impacting inpatient and outpatient coding in 2018 will be reimbursement, telemedicine, copy/paste and coding auditing, experts say. Also, starting in January, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 will require physicians to start reporting patient relationship modifiers.

7. Workforce

Regarding education and workforce issues, "upskilling" existing practitioners for more advanced roles in data analytics and informatics, preparing academic faculty to teach higher-level content in data analytics and revising curriculums to ensure students are prepared to meet workplace needs are all education and workplace trends to pay attention to in 2018, says AHIMA.

Source: [Healthcare IT News](#)

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