

e-Perspectives

on the Medical Transcription Profession

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A Rose by Any Other Name

Names are tough. When we name newborns, we give them

family names, faddish names, or saddle them with lofty names of people we expect them to become. It's always a guessing game, and we all know people whom we consider to have unlikely or unsuitable names—someone who doesn't look like a "Hortense" or "Mortimer" (with apologies to anyone with either of those names) or whatever name was given.

Naming a business is also difficult. It's almost a crystal-ball process. We name our businesses what we hope to become. If we survive, we may come to regret our low expectations at the beginning (Motel 6, Two Guys and a Truck) and wish we had had a greater vision of growth and success.

Naming a professional association must be one of the toughest jobs because we don't know at the beginning if we are going to be successful, just as we don't know if a business is going to endure. Thus, what we start with is not necessarily where we are going to end up. A professional society IS a business, and the business of the association may grow and evolve, and the earlier names may become inappropriate as the mission, goals, or client base change.

That's apparently what happened years ago when AMRA (American Medical Record Association) changed its name to AHIMA (American Health Information Management Association). So too has the AAMT (American Association for Medical Transcription) leadership voted a name change for this professional society. The new name selected is Association for Integrity of Healthcare Documentation (AIHD).

AAMT has always promoted integrity in healthcare documentation—long before it envisioned a name change. Will members of AIHD still perform medical transcription? Some will. Others will have other backgrounds and skill sets. Will AIHD members still edit medical documentation for accuracy and completeness and still CARE about quality? Some will. Are AIHD members going to be able to achieve or assure integrity in healthcare documentation better with the name change than they did as AAMT members? That remains to be seen. The name change is said to be an effort to be more inclusive, to open up practitioner membership to other healthcare professionals involved in clinical documentation and data capture. What will that mean for the medical transcription members of the association? Will efforts to advance the profession of medical transcription be diluted in an effort to be more inclusive and expand the membership base to obtain "increased relevance in a transforming marketplace" (to quote Peter Preziosi, AAMT Executive Director). Renaming the association and redefining the mission are just the first steps in promoting a new brand for the association. A rose by any other name . . .

This is the 52nd issue of *Perspectives* magazine. Featured in this issue is Dr. John Dirckx's update on Complementary and Alternative Medicine. He defines alternative medicine and distinguishes between modalities that are a positive part of modern healthcare and other modalities that may do more harm than good.

Diane Heath's "Don't Just Toss 'Em a Fish!" is reprinted from Fall 1997. No one has equaled her eloquence in teaching all of us the lessons of mentoring medical transcriptionists and to insist that they "learn to fish"—by getting a quality transcription education before entering the job market.

Rich Lederer, Ph.D., shows us how we as editors can at various times be "compassionate correctors," or not, under the guise of Conan the Grammarian.

Linda Campbell provides a Radiology Quick Quiz that tests our basic knowledge of radiology imaging terms. Answers follow the 18 questions.

What's New in Medicine rounds out this issue of *e-Perspectives*. These terms and many others will appear in the 2007 edition of *Vera Pyle's Current Medical Terminology*, 11th edition.



Sally C. Pitman

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