



Please join us for a
Social Event

October 25th



7:00-9:00 pm
Laketown Room A
at the Hilton
Garden Inn

(adjacent to the
Pontchartrain
Convention Center)

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:

President's
Message 2

CPHIMS -
You Can 3
Do It

2007-08
Board 4
Roster

Katrina-Phoenix Project

The Katrina-Phoenix Project for rebuilding physician offices in Louisiana with electronic health records (EHRs) instead of paper charts garnered national media attention at the Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Conference in New Orleans earlier this year.

But many of the physicians across the state are still running their offices with last century's paper, pen and manila folder record systems.

"Can you imagine a business today not using a computer in the process of daily work?" Dr. Tony Sun, Medical Director of Louisiana Health Care Review (LHCR), the state's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization. "You can just see the potential for error and duplication of services

in that kind of environment."

According to information gathered by LHCR, Louisiana is rapidly moving forward. Over 120 physician offices across Louisiana are participating in DOQ-IT, the Doctor's Office Quality-Information Technology initiative to transition offices from paper-based records to EHR.

Perhaps it was the hundreds of thousands of medical records destroyed in Katrina that spurred the state's medical practices to begin adopting the electronic records, regardless of the inconvenience and cost of transitioning. Chris Williams, LHCR DOQ-IT project team leader, says that the 140 physician offices across Louisiana participating in DOQ-IT are at varying stages of the transition process, with some still in the planning stage. Other practices, meanwhile, have fully integrated technology.

Numerous studies show the cost savings from electronic medical records. Some 25 percent of office-based doctors nationwide were using electronic medical record systems in 2005, up from 18.2 percent in 2001, according to the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey. Research has also shown that computerized systems can cut preventable medication errors by as much as 50 percent because the systems ensure that orders are complete, standardized and legible. In addition, The Rand Corp., a nonprofit research organization, estimates that electronic recordkeeping eventually will save the nation's health care system \$81 billion a year. EHR adoption is also an overriding issue for policymakers across the country. For the third year in a row, President George W. Bush has

(Continued on page 3)



President's Message

By Jeanie Berg

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world.... Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.."

Margaret Meade

President's Message

Dear LaHIMSS Members,

The Louisiana Chapter had an eventful year in 2007. One of our highlights was the HIMSS National Conference held in the State of Louisiana on February 25-March 1. HIMSS 2007 Annual Conference and Exhibition was attended by 24,081 attendees and 885 exhibitors in the city of New Orleans. 300 educational sessions were presented by guest speakers at the National Conference. The Exhibit Hall gave attendees a chance to stay up to date with the latest technology, business and clinical solutions. Members can look forward to HIMSS 2008 Annual Conference held in Orlando, Florida on February 24-28.

We have many challenges across our state with organizations moving from paper environments to a paperless environment, connecting communities electronically while providing security and privacy of patient records.

It is the LaHIMSS organization who can bring together Health Care professionals to make sure that the transition is a successful one. Our fall and spring conferences allow nurses, physicians, IT managers, administrators, pharmacist and payers to network with peers. We encourage chapter members to get involved with your local chapter. We are always looking for new members who are interested in improving the way health care is delivered with the use of technology.

This year will be an exciting year for our local chapter. New on our agenda are plans to hold meetings across the state for new and existing members. We are offering many benefits in 2007 to our members such as a message center on our interactive member website, educational sessions and additional conferences.

I look forward to an exciting year for our members as we continue to grow

the Chapter membership. Currently, we have 192 members. Membership is made up of leaders from HealthCare organizations who are providing leadership for the optimal use of healthcare information technology (IT) and management systems for improving healthcare.

Save the date! The LaHIMSS annual fall conference will be held 26th in New Orleans. Go to www.lahimss.org for pre-registration information.

I look forward to a successful year. If I can be of any assistance to you please contact me jberg@lhcr.org.

Jeanie Berg, RN, BSN, CPHIT/CPEHR
President LaHIMSS Chapter

CPHIMS Certification— you can do it!

By Susan Melsheimer

What if you had 82% likelihood of success at some endeavor? Pretty great odds!! Those are your odds of passing the CPHIMS exam (as of October 2006).

The exam consists of 115 multiple choice questions, but scores are based on 100 items. The extra 15 are pretest questions and are for research purposes only. There are three major content areas you have to have an understanding of- Systems (47%), Administration (46%) and General (7%).

Since the inception of the exam, the youngest person to pass was 27 years old and the oldest is 68. I'll bet you fall somewhere in there.... Lowest score was 37% (must have been a fun time the night before!) and the highest was 94%, with the average score of 71.1%. Passing score currently is 66%.

Once you have decided to go for it, there are three testing centers in Louisiana for your convenience. There are centers in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Shreveport. Or if it happens to be closer for you, there is also one in Jackson, Mississippi.

If you have spent any significant time in healthcare IT, I'll bet you have a pretty good shot at passing the exam on the first try. If not, you can take it as many times as necessary to pass. However, having spent 26 years in the healthcare IT field I passed it on the first try with no studying. (I had good intentions of studying but it never seemed to be the priority at any given moment.) I know of others who have done the same. Now, I'm not saying studying would be a bad thing. But if lack of time to study is stopping you, you may want to give it a try anyway.

But don't take my word for it, ask one of the Louisiana members below who is already certified. They'll be happy to share their experience with you. Go for it and good luck!

Claudia Blackburn
Terry Evans
Jared Lormand
Susan Melsheimer
Alex Mulea
Bach Nguyen
Sue Rachuig
Jody Spaulding
Jon Walker



Katrina-Phoenix Project—continued

emphasized the importance of health information technology in the 2007 State of the Union Address.

The quality improvement and patient safety aspects of EHRs is more important than just cost savings. "Many of the software programs have tools built into them to allow the doctor to take better care of the patient," said LHCR's Sun. And in terms of costs to doctors, while the migra-

tion from paper to computers is costly, research has found that doctors can expect to recoup expenses within a year of adopting the new systems.

As Louisiana's health care leaders and consumers face reports of system calamity and failure, (www.businessreport.com, February 27th, 2007, "Bracing for Impact"), the Katrina-Phoenix Project, DOQ-IT, and LHCR bring news of what rebuilding success can look like.

"Louisiana Leadership Summit III"

**EHR
Connectivity and Quality
&
Security and Privacy
October 26th , 2007**

**To register -
www.lahimss.org**

**Pontchartrain Center
Kenner, Louisiana**

Also Supported By
Louisiana Health Information Management Association &
Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration

President

Jeanie Berg, RN, BSN
Louisiana Health Care Review

President Elect

David Graser
West Jefferson Medical Center

Past President/Program

Terry M. Evans, CPHIMS
Thibodaux Regional Medical Center

Secretary

**Claudia Blackburn, MBA,
CPHIMS**
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady

Treasurer/RHIO Advocacy

Errol C. Labat
Blue Cross/Blue Shield of LA

Sponsorship Chair

Keith Schexnayder, Jr
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady

Membership Chair

Chris Williams
LA Healthcare Review

Advocacy Chair

Larry Flake, MD
Willis-Knighton Health System

Newsletter

**Susan M. Melsheimer,
MBA, CPA, CPHIMS**
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady

Communications Chair

Paul Kirk
Woman's Hospital

Technology

Bach Nguyen, CPHIMS
North Oaks Health System

At Large

Tony Sun, MD, MBA
Louisiana Health Care Review

At Large

Chris Belmont
Ochsner

At Large

Douglas Menefee
The Schumacher Group

At Large

Robert Clowers
Green Clinic Health System