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June 2009 FEATURE ARTICLES

From the Editor

HMT Evolves

By Michael McBride, Editor-in-Chief

Congress announced in May that it would have a "sweeping" reform package for the president to sign by July 31. It seems incredible that we could go from the installation of a new Health and Human Services secretary to the president's signature on law that affects the entire industry — an industry predicted to encompass one-fifth of the nation's GDP by 2017 — in just three months. Does Congress even know what truly needs fixing? It seems that getting any legislation passed, regardless of its effect, is the overriding priority here; but how will that simultaneously lower cost while improving healthcare?

Creating standards is within the government's purview, and standards are needed if we're ever to have a working nationwide health information network protecting us from pandemics and bioterrorism. The process, however, must not be rushed for political expediency. In addition, the industry must be given incentives to adopt such standards through tax breaks, rewards and revenue opportunities, not through penalties, threats and coercion. Creating such legislation takes honest research and serious debate to write laws that improve the lives of most Americans. It should not be accomplished quickly to fulfill a campaign pledge.

On to good news; *Health Management Technology* (*HMT*) is combining with *Communications News* (*CN*), a sister publication that has served the information technology market for more than 45 years. At *CN's* helm for the past nine years was Ken Anderberg, first as editor and later as both editor and publisher. Ken's background in publishing spans more than 40 years and includes winning the prestigious Jesse H. Neal Award for editorial excellence, among others. Please join me in welcoming Ken as *HMT's* new publisher and editorial director.

As healthcare IT evolves so will *HMT's* coverage. You will find more technology, more products and more drill-down to the fine technical details that CIOs and IT directors need. We will increase our coverage of government's involvement in healthcare and include roundtable discussions with top industry execs and IT decision makers on pertinent topics affecting healthcare as a whole; and *HMT's* Web site will feature expanded content and interactive blogs hosted by IT execs, CIOs and *HMT's* editors.

Informed readers is our highest priority, and blending *CN* with *HMT* supports our mission to be your top resource for healthcare IT information. Stay tuned.

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