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AHDI and MTIA Forge Partnership to Shape Future of Healthcare Documentation

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MODESTO AND CHICAGO, January 31, 2007 — The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI) – formerly the American Association for Medical Transcription – and the Medical Transcription Industry Association (MTIA) announced today that the organizations have formed a strategic legal partnership to pool critical resources and collaborate on key initiatives. Under the guide star of “optimizing healthcare delivery by providing timely, accurate and relevant clinical information,” the associations have formed a business relationship that will allow for the outsourcing of selected MTIA business operations to AHDI, the equal utilization of a mutually agreed upon Executive Director, and merging of efforts on agreed-upon tactical and strategic initiatives as defined under the relationship.

"It is no surprise that we find ourselves in the midst of a rapidly changing healthcare delivery market. In response, the dynamic partnership between AHDI and MTIA immediately brings forth a highly strategic collaboration, greater union of combined resources and unlimited amounts of collective expertise," states Jay Cannon, 2007 president of MTIA. "I believe this coordinated effort will address many of the critical areas concerning the future state of clinical documentation processing; not only for our respective members, but supporting business partners as well."

AHDI 2007 President Cathy Baughman, CMT, FAAMT agrees. "At this historic time in health information technology, with a national movement toward an electronic health record, this collaboration will provide both memberships a unified voice when establishing health policy as it relates to standardization of documentation," says Baughman. "Knowing how critical this process is to the way medicine is practiced, it makes good sense to bring together the expertise and wisdom of each association so that we eliminate redundancy in operation and channel our joint resources toward driving the real initiatives that impact the industry."

Both organizations recognize that there may be areas where their interests diverge, and the organizations will address and advance those initiatives individually. However, both AHDI and MTIA believe strongly that the health and future of healthcare documentation hinges on

the professionals of both organizations working together to shape and claim that future. The associations have further defined their key areas of mutual agreement and focus. AHDI and MTIA are committed to:

- *Patient safety and continuity of care through accurate, timely health data capture and documentation.*
- *Insuring sustainable and profitable businesses as the market grows and evolves.*
- *Providing useable, relevant healthcare data that informs clinical decision-making.*
- *Supporting the development of technologies and standards that enable efficient, accurate data exchange across healthcare systems.*
- *Promoting the critical role of human judgment in health data capture and documentation.*
- *Defining the role of the transcription skill set in the electronic health record.*
- *Preparing the workforce that will meet the evolving data capture and documentation needs of the healthcare delivery system.*

"In an era of healthcare transformation, especially with a critical eye on the clinical documentation process from the dimensions of quality, cost, and integrity, the clinical documentation sector has a great deal of work to do in retooling the workforce, realigning educational programs, and adopting new and innovative business models to meet emerging needs." stated Peter Preziosi, PhD, CAE, AHDI executive director. "The AHDI and MTIA partnership will create synergies and build the necessary scale for the sector to address evolving clinical care, technological, and workforce challenges that will enable the U.S. healthcare system to remain world class."

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI), formerly AAMT, has been the professional organization representing medical transcriptionists since 1978. AHDI sets standards of practice and education for medical transcriptionists, administers a certification program, has established a code of ethics, and advocates on behalf of the profession. There are over 135 component associations of AHDI, each of which holds regular educational meetings and symposia. For more information, visit www.aamt.org. The not-for-profit Medical Transcription Industry Association is the world's largest trade association serving medical transcription service operators. Its mission is to create an environment in which medical transcription companies can prosper, grow, and deliver the highest level of healthcare documentation services. For more information, visit www.mtia.com