

**PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT THE 11TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF GHIMA
Bolgatanga, Upper East Region
24th – 27th June 2026**

Theme: *"Towards an Integrated Digital Health Ecosystem: Implementing the Ghana Health Information System; the Role of the Health Information Professional."*

Chairperson, Registrar of the Allied Health Professions Council, Director of Ministry of Health, Director-General of the Ghana Health Service, distinguished guests, members of the Council of Elders, National Executive Council and other Statutory Committee, and fellow Health Information Management Professionals, Good morning.

It is a great honour to welcome you to the 11th Annual General Meeting of GHIMA here in Bolgatanga.

This year's theme speaks directly to the future of healthcare in Ghana. As our health system requires increasingly digitalize approach, the Health Information Professionals remains central to the digitisation. And also ensuring quality data, effective decision-making, patient safety, and accountability. The success of the Ghana Health Information System will depend largely on the competence, integrity, and commitment of our profession.

Let us briefly look at four key areas that define GHIMA's growth and future direction: leadership and governance, legal integrity, professional standards, and advocacy.

1. Leadership and Governance

GHIMA continues to operate under a strong leadership and governance framework comprising the Constitution, the Annual General Meeting, the National Executive Council, the Council of Elders, and Statutory Committees. To augment this, a 5-year strategic plan is already completed for action. These structures provide accountability, continuity, and strategic direction for our Professional Group.

2. Legal Integrity and Compliance

Leadership is pleased to report once again that GHIMA remains compliant with the requirements of the Registrar General's Department. Our constitution, audited accounts, and membership records generated at the AHPC and membership database of GHIMA remain very important to this compliance.

Compliance is essential because a profession seeking greater recognition must demonstrate credibility, transparency, and accountability.

3. Professional Standards and Capacity Building

In collaboration with the Allied Health Professions Council, GHIMA has contributed to the development and implementation of key professional regulatory instruments. These include the

Scope of Practice, Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, Accreditation Guidelines for Training and Education, and Continuing Professional Development programmes.

We have also earmarked expansion of training models to enable members catch up with the current electronic health information management models and other emerging areas critical to digital health practices.

As technology evolves, Health Information Professionals must expand their competencies beyond records management into data analytics, information governance, cybersecurity, interoperability, and digital health leadership.

4. Advocacy and Professional Recognition

GHIMA remains committed to working with the Ministry of Health, the apex of the governance of health in Ghana, all agencies under the MoH that practice health information management, either government-owned, quasi and private. The AHPC remains our regulator, the seat and channel of both the professional body and the practice. We continue to look forward to securing a dedicated HIM schedule, address licensing challenges, strengthen professional recognition, and advance policy reforms that support Health Information Management practice in Ghana.

Key Challenges Facing the Profession

While progress has been made, several challenges require urgent attention and I humbly implore our stakeholders for attention.

First, quackery and professional encroachment. We call for mandatory license verification for all HIM recruitments, postings, and appointments nationwide.

Second, disparities in professional grading. Currently there are about five different grades groups for HIM professionals in Ghana. We humbly bring this to the attention of the Ministry of Health and the AHPC to help in harmonizing the grading structures and career progression pathways for all HIM cadres.

Third, poor working conditions and inadequate infrastructure. Many HIM professionals continue to operate without adequate office space, equipment, and digital tools needed to support an integrated digital health ecosystem.

Fourth, low participation in professional activities. We must expand hybrid learning opportunities and regional training programmes to improve accessibility and participation.

Fifth, inadequate welfare systems. Recent experiences involving some of our colleagues have highlighted the need for a comprehensive and sustainable welfare package. Such a framework should provide support during illness, emergencies, and other difficult circumstances while promoting the overall well-being of members and their families.

Sixth, the absence of a permanent national secretariat for GHIMA. A dedicated office remains essential for effective coordination, advocacy, documentation, and institutional growth.

Finally, low awareness of professional identity and belongingness among some Health Information practitioners. While many members actively support the growth of the profession, there are still practitioners who do not fully appreciate the value of professional association, regulation, continuous development, and collective advocacy. A strong profession requires active participation, ownership, and commitment from its members. We must therefore strengthen professional orientation, mentorship, and engagement to foster a greater sense of identity, pride, and belonging within the Health Information Management profession.

Supporting Our Colleagues in Times of Need

Before proceeding further, I wish to acknowledge some of our colleagues whose health challenges remind us that GHIMA is not merely a professional association but a family.

We are grateful to God for the successful kidney transplant of **Mr. Benjamin Twum** and continue to wish him strength, renewed health, and a full recovery.

We also remember **Ms. Felicia Awuni**, who continues to courageously live with kidney-related health challenges, as well as **Mr. Theophilus Entsil** and **Mr. Nathan Edem Tsorli**, who are currently facing different health conditions. I would end the list with colleagues who suffered various accidents and disasters and extend same encouragement to them.

On behalf of the entire GHIMA fraternity, we extend our thoughts, prayers, and support to them and their families.

Their experiences remind us that beyond professional excellence, we have a collective responsibility to care for one another. It is for this reason that I call upon this AGM to give serious consideration to the establishment of a structured and sustainable welfare plan capable of supporting members during periods of illness, hardship, and unforeseen challenges.

Priority Areas for the Future

As we look ahead, our focus should be on:

1. Harmonizing all HIM professional grades into a unified national grading structure.
2. Rebranding and repositioning the profession to align with the rapidly evolving digital health and information technology landscape.
3. Strengthening understanding and implementation of AHPC regulatory documents to ensure professionalism, accountability, and adherence to standards. The next critical document to cement the documentation endeavours is the **“Handbook for the HIO”**
4. Rolling out nationwide professional training programmes to equip members with the knowledge and competencies required for Ghana's digital health transformation agenda.
5. Establishing a sustainable welfare and support system for all GHIMA members to provide assistance during illness, emergencies, and other unforeseen circumstances.

6. Supporting the establishment of the Allied Health Specialist College. GHIMA wholeheartedly welcomes this important national initiative and stands ready to contribute to its successful implementation. We are pleased to indicate that the Association has developed a curriculum guide for the training of Health Information Management Specialists in readiness and remains prepared to work with the Allied Health Professions Council, the Ministry of Health, academic institutions, and other stakeholders in shaping specialist education and advanced professional practice within our field.

Appreciation

GHIMA extend sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Health, the Allied Health Professions Council, the Ghana Health Service, the Health Services Workers' Union, the Registrar General's Department, our training institutions, development partners, and all GHIMA members for their continuous support and commitment to the growth of the profession.

GHIMA still have in memories and acknowledge the fallen heroes who fell during duty lines. The late Mr. Frank Addo is the typical example.

GHIMA further commend all past and present leaders of GHIMA whose sacrifices, vision, and dedication have brought the Association to its current level of growth and recognition.

Conclusion

Colleagues, health data remains the foundation of modern healthcare. Every policy, programme, and clinical decision depends on accurate, secure, and reliable information.

As Ghana advances towards an integrated digital health ecosystem, Health Information Professionals must remain at the forefront of innovation, accountability, and excellence.

Let us strengthen our unity, uphold our standards, embrace digital transformation, and continue advocating for the recognition and advancement of our profession.

Together, we can build a stronger Health Information Management profession and a stronger health system for Ghana.

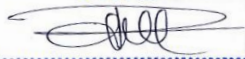
Thank you.

God bless Health Information Management Practices.

God bless GHIMA.

God bless the Republic of Ghana.

RICHARD DELALI AHEDOR
(PRESIDENT)
GHIMA



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