A PROPOSAL TO THE BOARD
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION
FOR A
WORKING GROUP CONFERENCE

Submitted by: Nancy M. Lorenzi, Ph.D.
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March 6, 1991

The Organizational Issues of Medical Informatics

INTRODUCTION

As biomedical knowledge has increased exponentially, professionals have developed strategies to cope with the vast volume of medical knowledge. As technology became more sophisticated and widespread, the management strategies for coping with the body of biomedical knowledge sometimes became more diffuse or much less clearly defined.

As rapid technological change is instituted into organizations, many accompanying issues, e.g. what is the vision of the organization for managing the information? What could or should be done first, second, third? Who is in charge of managing and making the decisions for this very complicated and complex area? How does the organization respond to the unclarity and uncertainty of the rapid changes?

Organizational stress is caused by rapid change. The implementation of technology more rapidly than the members of the organization are capable of assimilating the technological implications also causes stress. The end users of the technology may not know effective ways to express their needs, and thus do not participate, or they were not asked to participate in the decisions in the first place. When a broad based distribution of technology occurs, sometimes the end users and the developers/implementers of the technology find that they have not spoken the same language.

PROPOSAL

This proposal is to invite 25-40 informatics and organizational professionals to a working group conference which will focus on the organizational impact of informatics.

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The objectives of the working group conference include:

(1) To identify and define effective leadership characteristics which support the successful implementation of informatics principles in organizations.

(2) To identify methodologies for determining strategic direction of informatics within organizations.

(3) To identify effective organizational structures for different types of organizations with regard to informatics.

(4) To identify, define, and promote effective strategies for introducing change in complex medical organizations.

(5) To promote training programs to increase the awareness of informatics professionals with regard to the organizational issues.

(6) To maintain liaison with appropriate national organizations with an interest in medical informatics generally and organizational implications specifically.

Membership:

This proposes that the working group conference consist of 20-40 members from the widest geographic representation possible. (Marion, help!) It is further proposed that the following people be appointed as officers of the working group conference:

IMIA Liaison-Chairman of the Working Group - Nancy M. Lorenzi (USA)

Organizing Chairman - Basil Georgepulius (Marion, he is known for his expertise in organizational change, but he is not known for any expertise in informatics.) (USA)

Program Chairman -

Principal Advisor - Marion Ball (USA)

(Obviously, this section is extremely sketchy.)

Scheduled Activities:

Wherever possible, working group xx meetings will be scheduled in conjunction with other conferences and meetings. The following are two suggestions for near-term meetings:

The AMIA Spring Conference - June 1991 in San Francisco

SCAMC Conference, November 1991, Washington, D.C.

Projected Outcomes:

Clearly, there are numerous organizations which can benefit directly from more effective strategies for introducing technology and informatics into complex organizations. The outcomes for this conference would include:

(1) An objective definition of leadership characteristics necessary for successful informatics programs.

(2) Effective strategies for introducing change in complex medical organizations.

(3) Effective strategies for determining strategic directions for various organizations.

(4) Principles which define effective organizational structures for informatics deliverers within the context of complex medical organizations.

<u>Budget/Source of Funds:</u>   (?????)

<u>Request:</u>

It is respectfully requested that the General Assembly endorse/approve the need
for and beginning of planning for a conference for a working group on the
organizational issues of medical informatics. It is further respectfully
requested that the General Assembly endorse/approve the appointment of
Dr. Nancy M. Lorenzi as Chairman of the Working Group and the objectives and
scheduled activities as outlined above.

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3/6/91

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing

To Nancy M. LORENZI, Ph.D.
Associate Senior Vice President
Medical Center Information and Communications
University of Cincinnati
231 Bethesda Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45267-0574
U.S.A.

EC/JW/vd/91-178   Leuven, April 15th, 1991

Dear Dr. Lorenzi,

Your proposal for an IMIA Working Conference on the "Organizational Aspects of
Medical Informatics" received favorable comments from the Board of IMIA, which
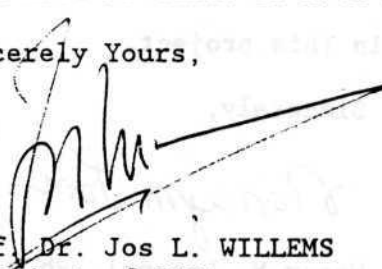recently met in Bordeaux.

Marion Ball may have told you already that several members of the Board, among
whom J.R. Scherrer from Geneva and Salah Mandil from WHO, supported the idea
and suggested that your draft should be worked out further.

For your information, hereby enclosed you will find a copy with guidelines and
recommendations for IMIA Working Conferences. I assume that you aim for a
closed conference with a limited number of participants.

Prof. Scherrer was especially interested in this topic and would appreciate it
very much if you could also stimulate submission of papers on this topic for
MEDINFO 92.

I wish you success with your initiative and look forward towards a more
concrete proposal, for submission to the Board and the General Assembly which
will meet November 15-17th 1991, just preceding SCAMC.

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. WILLEMS
President of IMIA

cc. : Dr. Marion Ball
      Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer
      Dr. Salah Mandil

IMIA Secretariat: c/o IFIP Secretariat, 16 Place Longemalle CH-1204 Geneve, Switzerland

**University of Cincinnati
Medical Center**

**Medical Center Information
and Communications (MCIC)**

231 Bethesda Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45267-0574

May 2, 1991

Rec'd & re-forwarded 14.5.91

Dr. Jos L. Willems
President
International Medical
  Informatics Association
c/o IFIP Secretariat
16 Place Longemalle
CH-1204
Geneve, Switzerland

Dear Dr. Willems:

Thank you very much for your letter of April 15 encouraging us to move ahead in developing an IMIA Working Conference on the "Organizational Aspects of Medical Informatics." I feel it is an exciting and timely topic.

I will definitely send a formal proposal, following the guidelines you provided, to you prior to the November meeting. Actually, I did not know that Marion was going to present my rough draft. I appreciate the Board's flexibility and tolerance in receiving it in that rough form.

I already have a paper submitted to MEDINFO 92. In addition, I will encourage others to submit when I attend the June AMIA meeting.

Again, my thanks. I look forward to working with IMIA in this project.

Sincerely,

Nancy M. Lorenzi, Ph.D.
Associate Senior Vice
President

NML:kab

91NML.BK8

cc: Dr. Marion Ball

2.7.91

June 24, 1991

FAXED TO:

Professor Dr. Joseph L. Willems
President, International
Medical Informatics Association
The IMIA Secretariat
c/o IFIP Secretariat
16 Place Longemalle
CH-1204
Geneve, Switzerland

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HARD COPY
IN MAIL. Regards
Gaynett

Dear Professor Dr. Willems

First, a belated apology for the length of time I have taken to respond to
your letter. I was delighted to receive your letter indicating that the Board
of IMIA supported the draft proposal for a working conference on "The
Organizational Aspects of Medical Informatics."

I attended the International meeting of the American Medical Informatics
Association in San Francisco on June 6. Dr. Ball was extremely supportive and
helpful. She indicated that Professor J. R. Scherrer was especially
interested in this topic. Via a separate letter I have communicated with
Professor Sherrer also. I have spent considerable time seeking funding and
programmatic topics. It is my intention to submit a proposal for your review
by August 1, 1991. I shall also attend the SCAMC meeting in Washington and
look forward to the opportunity to meet you and Professor Scherrer at that
time.

Sincerely,

Nancy M. Lorenzi, Ph.D.
Associate Senior Vice
President

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cc: Dr. Marion Ball
    Professor Dr. J. R. Scherrer