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AMIA Receives Grant from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to Foster the Development of Applied Clinical Informatics as a Medical Specialty

Bethesda, MD, March 8, 2007 – The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) has been awarded a $300,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to establish the foundation for a system that will certify competency of physicians as a subspecialty of applied clinical informatics.

The growing role of information technology within health care delivery organizations has created the need to deepen the pool of physician informaticians who are able to help organizations maximize the effectiveness of their investment in information technology and in so doing maximize impact on safety, quality, effectiveness and efficiency of care.

To achieve this goal, a necessary first step is a process in which AMIA will produce two documents; a core content document and an essential training requirements document. We anticipate that this AMIA-led project will lay the groundwork for a nationally recognized program of certification in clinical informatics for physicians.

Don E. Detmer, MD, MA, FACMI, AMIA President and CEO is the principal investigator. Benson Munger, PhD, of the University of Arizona, Department of Emergency Medicine is the co-principal investigator. John H. Holmes, PhD, an expert in clinical epidemiology and Assistant Professor of Medical Informatics in Epidemiology at HUP, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine provided grant support as a consultant. Jeffrey J. Williamson, AMIA Vice President of Education is a co-investigator.
“The establishment of a mechanism to support applied clinical informatics as a formal discipline is essential for the future of medicine,” says Dr. Detmer. “As enrollments in clinical informatics programs increase, this grant will create an opportunity for AMIA to maintain a rigorous educational infrastructure for the discipline.” Dr. Holmes added, “It is important for us to examine the profession and to provide solutions that will develop criteria for certification. These solutions will also support various methodologies for implementation.”

“We deeply appreciate the confidence and support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for this important project. Educating tomorrow’s leaders in clinical informatics will ensure that we can build the informatics infrastructure necessary to improve the quality of healthcare delivery,” said Paul C. Tang, MD, AMIA Chairman.

“It is essential to build a cadre of physicians with more advanced informatics skills,” stated John R. Lumpkin, MD, MPH, RWJF senior vice president and director of its health care group. “This new subspecialty will help strengthen clinicians’ ability to use health information technology in ways that significantly enhance the safety and quality of patient care.”

“As Dr. Detmer has noted, nursing informatics has been very involved in applied clinical informatics for years. The nursing informatics leaders in AMIA look forward to working with our physician colleagues to achieve the objectives of this historic grant,” said Carole A. Gassert, RN, PhD, FACMI, FAAN, AMIA co-chair to the Alliance for Nursing Informatics and associate professor and associate dean for information & technology, University of Utah College of Nursing.

“This grant is a significant milestone for AMIA as it supports the importance of physicians understanding and using information technology in the process of improving the quality and efficiency of patient care,” said Christine Cassel, MD, President and CEO of the American Board of Internal Medicine.

About AMIA
The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) is an organization of leaders shaping the future of health information technology in the United States and abroad. AMIA is dedicated to the development and application of medical informatics in support of patient care, teaching, research, and health care administration. Complete information about AMIA is available at: www.amia.org
About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

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