

Foreword II

Marion J. Ball, Charlotte A. Weaver, and Joan M. Kiel present to us a book that is a chronicle of numerous recent Information Technology (IT) success stories, a roadmap for continued development, and a vehicle for knowledge sharing that will benefit future IT implementations.

This compilation provides a snapshot of the state of health care IT today. The book's diverse collection of industry insights and strategic analyses combines with many domestic and international case studies to connect the interrelated threads—revealing how each element is tied to the complex tapestry of health care.

This book is also about the future, in two distinct ways. First, it contains forward-thinking accounts of where today's advancements are heading and where the next great opportunities lie. It provides a vision of health care's future, with progressive phases characterized by increasing connectedness, responsiveness, and collaboration.

On a second, more valuable level, this book provides a vehicle for knowledge sharing and continuous improvement that organizations will use to cultivate a new generation of success stories. It shares not only results, but also descriptions of *how* those results were achieved. This book gives you many detailed accounts of real change in real organizations. In doing so, it reveals the various detours and roadblocks along the road that start with IT systems and end in organizational transformation.

When viewed as a whole, certain common threads emerge from the collection of individual submissions. Among them:

- A recognition of the universal value of planning.
- An emphasis on the management of human factors, not just the technology.
- A persistent focus on the customer as a guide for decisions.
- An understanding that true transformation goes beyond the automation of existing processes:

The healthcare leaders who contributed to this book have done more than advance the cause of IT in their organizations. They have taken a vital extra step by sharing their stories for the benefit of the greater healthcare community. Now, we may all learn their lessons, build on their progress, and move closer to our common vision. So, as it helps us *see* a transformed future for health care, this book actually helps us *create* a future of better care through technology.

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Healthcare Information Management Systems

Cases, Strategies, and Solutions

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