

◆ Introduction to the Information Technology in Health Care Track

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The information technology in health care track at HICSS serves as a forum at which health care, computer science, and information systems professionals can come together to discuss issues related to the application of information technology in health care. While the medical, technical, and managerial perspectives each contributes to particular aspects of the health care problems, the complexity of today's problems requires more than one perspective. As a unique opportunity for cross-disciplinary interaction, we hope this track will give our conference participants and the readers of these proceedings new insights into the problems they face.

This year we continue four minitracks with excellent records from previous years and add two new minitracks. Our goal is to keep the track focused on current issues in health care. Thus, this year the track consists of six minitracks:

- Advanced Bioinformatics Tools for Translational Research
- Consumer Health Informatics
- Human Computer Interface Issues in Healthcare IT
- Interoperability and Standards in Health Care IT
- IT Adoption and Evaluation in Healthcare
- IT Applications in Health Care Environments

The minitrack coordinators provide brief summaries of their minitracks and overviews of the papers in their sessions.

The papers in these minitracks address a wide range of clinical, managerial, and technical issues, and report on studies from around the world. The topics include decision support systems for clinical pathways and emergency room triage, approaches to evaluating health information systems, the impact of culture and language on system usage, privacy, and on-line support for patients. Yet, despite this diversity, all of the papers have a common focus: How can information technology be used to improve the quality of care, the efficiency of the delivery of health care, and the access to health care?

In attempting to answer this question, each author has focused on a particular aspect of information technology and healthcare. Their inclusion in this track reflects on the quality, relevance, and importance of their work. We believe the collection of these perspectives provides for stimulating and productive discussions and the generation of new ideas.

I wish to thank all of the people who have worked so diligently to develop this track; I appreciate the time and effort the minitrack coordinators had to spend over the past year. The high quality collection of papers in the track is the fruit of their efforts. We look forward to the further development of this track. I welcome, and strongly solicit, your participation in this track at future HICSS conferences. Please contact me with your ideas for new minitracks or papers.

I hope you find the proceedings useful and enjoyable.