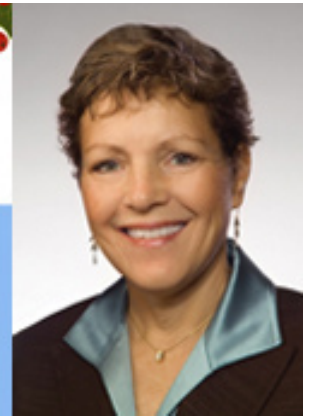




Inside AAMI

A Message from AAMI's President Mary K. Logan, JD, CAE



I've just finished reading "Why Hospitals Should Fly" and highly recommend it to all. Purely by happenstance, my reading of this book coincides with the 10th anniversary of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, "To Err is Human." The book's message is that hospitals will not become safe for patients and the IOM recommendations will not become a reality until hospitals follow the lessons of the airline industry by standardizing hospital-wide procedures and practices, by taking a "systems" approach to healthcare, by encouraging teamwork and a hospital culture focused exclusively on patient safety, and by embracing mistakes as a way of learning and strengthening the system rather than finding blame.

There is a holiday gift tucked into this gem of a book for all of us. For example:

- For medical device companies, you already follow the "standardization" lessons of the airline industry through your participation in the standards-setting process and your search for excellence through your participation in AAMI's educational courses on topics such as the "quality systems" regulation. Perhaps the book will inspire you to recommend a new work item for a standard that needs an overhaul, remind you that it's time to take advantage of AAMI's educational programs, or utilize your "systems" skills to help hospital customers embrace standardization and a systems approach to healthcare.
- For hospital clinical engineering and healthcare technology department staff, perhaps the gift of this book will be to recommend its reading to your colleagues and supervisor. Maybe it will encourage you to show how your department can contribute to standardization and a systems approach to healthcare, through strengthened supply chain management, equipment planning, inventory management, and preventive maintenance (PM), or through even tighter response times and improved turnaround times for high priority equipment issues.

I have asked all of my senior staff to read the book, and I hope it will inspire us to find ways to bring the richness of AAMI's diverse "customers" together to solve "systems" issues. You all have a great deal to share with one another, and AAMI can do much more to help make your hospitals fly.

What's New:

This fall has been a busy time at AAMI, as staff and the leadership implemented several projects and began planning for new challenges in the New Year. Among the highlights:

- This month, the 5th edition of IT Horizons was published and has been mailed to all AAMI members. It's filled with practical and insightful articles about IEC 80001, systems engineering, device interoperability, distributed antenna systems, and much more.
- In the education arena, a new training program on human factors was held. New webinars were also held on achieving innovation and breakthrough usability in medical devices; interpreting and implementing ANSI/AAMI/IEC 62304:2006, applying ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993-7:2008, and understanding TIR 17:2008 and supply chain management.

- AAMI's Technology Management Council (TMC) continues to make strides in promoting the biomed profession. This fall, two TMC leaders (Dave Francoeur and Ken Maddock) helped produce and starred in a new five-minute video to promote the biomed field as a career option. The video will be featured soon on AAMI's new student website and shared with schools to use, too.
- To that end, I am happy to report that the U.S. Department of Labor will officially recognize "medical device repairers" as a separate occupation in its Occupational Outlook Handbook in 2010—rather than grouping medical device repairers with watch, camera, and musical instrument repairers as they did in the past.
- In November, AAMI launched a new online Medical Technology Directory to help manufacturers, consultants, and others promote their products and services. You can check it out [here](#).
- 2009 saw a record year for applications for ICC Certifications with over 500 individuals taking the exams.
- In recent months, AAMI staff created a set of staff core values and service standards to ensure that AAMI members and customers receive a consistently high level of service from AAMI.
- AAMI's Benchmarking Solution (ABS) continues to gain momentum, attracting new subscribers who see great value in benchmarking clinical engineering programs to assess and improve processes, procedures, and policies. For example, the Texas Children's Hospital has joined on, because as the hospital noted, "AAMI's Benchmarking Solution offers methodology to help biomedical/clinical engineering programs understand, measure, and compare their progress with those of other institutions of all types and sizes."
- And one other important note: For the first time in AAMI history, AAMI's Institutional membership exceeded the 200 member mark. We currently have 207 institutional members and 171 corporate members, both are membership records. Thank you for being part of the AAMI community, and please let us know how we can bring even greater value to you and your organization.

What's Coming Up:

At their November meeting, the AAMI Board of Directors conducted an all-day special strategy session to jumpstart our 2010 strategic planning. In small round-robin conversations, they discussed a series of strategic questions about successful standards setting for future regulated medical devices; meeting the needs of corporate, institutional and individual members; preparing clinical engineering staff for future success in a changing health care arena; and the like.

The Board's discussion was also very helpful to senior staff, as we prepare to tackle our priorities for 2010. Senior staff spent a day together in early December identifying 2010 priorities and organizational goals. The overall themes for upcoming projects are to:

1. Increase efforts to bring together different groups of AAMI's diverse membership to discuss common challenges and use the diversity of their perspectives to solve common issues.
2. Create greater visibility and stronger message points on the value of medical devices and the important role of clinical engineering departments.
3. Expand distance learning.
4. Grow AAMI's online presence.
5. Strengthen and build support for future career paths for biomed.

2010 promises to be a busy year, with a lot of exciting and new opportunities.

- AAMI will offer more educational programs and webinars than ever before on issues ranging from connectors and dialysis standards to benchmarking, purchasing and supply chain management.

- A new course on statistical tools and techniques for a quality system will be launched in February in Arlington, VA, and held again in September in Las Vegas.
- Two new special editions of Horizons will be published in 2010—one focused on home healthcare issues and the other on human factors issues. As always, both publications will be mailed to all AAMI members.
- A major new human factors standard, HE75, will be among the many new standards that will be released in 2010.
- Staff is working with FDA and leadership from IEC/SC 62A (Common aspects of electro-medical equipment, administered by AAMI) and ISO/TC 184/SC 2 (Robots and robotic devices) to plan an invitation-only meeting for February 2010 to consider standards needs in the area of medical robots. Member companies with an interest in surgical robots or service robots used in patient care should contact Theresa Zuraski (tzuraski@aami.org or 703-525-4890 ext 209) for more information.
- The 2010 AAMI Annual Conference Program Committee, which met in early October, has established a dynamic educational program for the conference that will have a strong focus on medical device connectivity issues and the IEC 80001 standard currently under development. The full conference program is available online.
- Plans are also taking shape for the 20th Annual AAMI/FDA 2010 International Conference on Medical Device Standards and Regulation, which will be held on March 9-10 in Reston, VA, just outside of Washington, DC. We're focused on bringing more edgy topics forward for discussion and welcome your suggestions.
- And there will be a lot more to report on in the coming months, including updates on recent meetings that I had with leaders of the Joint Commission and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) about potential new collaborations.
- Also, AAMI will be moving its office space in 2010, staying in the same neighborhood in Arlington, VA. As of press time, we are zeroing in on the new location and will have more to report in our next quarterly communication. Goals for the new space are to create room for more and larger meetings, have a more inviting and functional environment, and preserve room for growth, all while maintaining close to our current footprint in order to manage our overhead well. We'll look forward to sharing more with you as the plans develop, and we'll also look forward to welcoming you at a future AAMI meeting in the new space.

The Value of Meetings

For those of you who face continuing challenges justifying travel for 2010, a recent story in the Wall Street Journal has some helpful reminders about the value of face to face meetings. The essence of the article is that travel budgets are increasing again, because of the value of face to face meetings. Some of the reasons:

1. “. . . research informs us that when a company reduces its travel budget, it loses both revenue and profits, giving competitors a real advantage.”
2. Face-to-face meetings are more likely to result in breakthrough thinking;
3. Face-to-face meetings let attendees develop transparency and trust in a way that isn't possible with remote communication;
4. Group processes that require coordination, consensus, timing, and persuasion of others are better accomplished when meeting face to face.

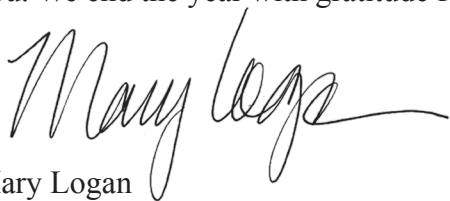
I hope to see you in 2010 at AAMI's Annual Conference in Tampa, a standards meeting, our international standards conference, or one of our top-notch training programs. While we're expanding our distance learning programs for training that is conducive to remote media, we will continue to emphasize the value of bringing you all together in various venues for all of these reasons. Your participation does make an important difference.

A Few Final Thoughts...

I want to personally thank all of you who have taken the time to meet with me in my first nine months at AAMI, in various venues and by phone. The visits and conversations are priceless in helping AAMI staff understand your challenges, share your best practices, and know how we can address your needs.

In 2010, we'll continue to reach out to meet with you, and I'd love to hear from you directly at any time. We want to hear your suggestions and comments on new standards and hospital recommended practices, your frustrations and how we might be able to help, and examples of particular problems inside of hospitals involving adverse incidents, where we might be able to help through education or cross-disciplinary discussions (e.g., a particular human factors challenge; a particular hospital protocol issue; software validation challenge; a systems issue; etc.). This type of information will help us to help all of you, so thanks for sharing.

And finally...as we approach the end of this decade, the entire AAMI staff sends you our best wishes for a joyous holiday season, a new decade of prosperity for your organizations, and a richly rewarding New Year for you. We end the year with gratitude for your involvement with AAMI.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Logan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mary Logan
AAMI President