



## EXSpeech®

**UW Medical Foundation** Rolls-Out Dictaphone EXSpeech Recognition Solution To 74 Transcriptionists and Saves Nearly a Half-Million Dollars In Outsourcing... All in 6 Months.

**A sense of accomplishment is evident throughout the Health Information Management Department at the University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation, Madison, WI, and for good reason. Six months ago, the department was faced with many of the same issues plaguing other HIM Departments—rising report volumes and the daily ups-and-downs of managing an outside transcription company, as well as a staff of 74 FTE's. The result was less than target report turnaround, and mixed quality and responsiveness from their outside service that was costing them nearly a half-million-dollars annually.**

### Rising Costs & Outsourcing Frustrations Bring Speech Recognition To The Forefront

“We were on a rollercoaster ride, some days were good, others were not. We had the challenges of dealing with our outsource company, and even then we were pressed to meet our turnaround targets,” said Amy Whitcomb, Coordinator Medical Transcription Services. “Outsourcing costs were on the rise, and we were faced with needing to pay our internal staff overtime and extra hours just to keep up with an average volume of 111,000 dictated minutes each month. Even then, we were going over 72 hours on some reports, and averaging a 52 hour report turnaround.”

Today the story is quite a different one. Having decided to move ahead with the transition of their department to Dictaphone EXSpeech recognition solution from Nuance, the department now has taken a major leap forward in resolving all past issues that challenged them.

### Strong Double-digit Productivity

“We've increased productivity of our staff by as much as 57%, and that translates into zero backlog and an average turnaround of under 24 hours.

### Highlights

- 74 transcriptionists editing 7,500 speech recognized reports monthly.
- Dictaphone EXSpeech recognition solution from Nuance.
- Transcription productivity gain of 25% overall, with individuals as high as 57%.
- Transcriptionists trained in 3 months.
- \$480,000 annual savings by eliminating outsourcing.



Amy Whitcomb, Coordinator, Medical Transcription Services

Some days we're literally typing behind the doctors as they are dictating," said Whitcomb.

### Rapid Rollout & Even Faster ROI

The Dictaphone EXSpeech system's ability to easily roll-out to nearly one-third of UW's 397 physicians across 35 locations, while over the same three month period being able to train a staff of 74 transcriptionists on the system's new editing tools, contributed to the rapid ROI they experienced.

Sandy Schumacher, RHIT, Director Health Information Services, looks back at their objectives. "Our goal was to eliminate the \$480,000 we were spending each year on outside transcription services, while giving our internal staff a new set of tools to more effectively manage our current volumes, and being able to accommodate growth in the future without adding staff."

### Very Few Bumps In The Road

"While the transition took a dedicated effort on the part of everyone, looking back we really had very few bumps in the road. Even when we began transitioning transcriptionists from typing to editing of speech-recognized text, we didn't see much of a productivity drop like we could have," Whitcomb said. "Most amazing though was the fact that only 6-months into the project we had reached a level of productivity gain that allowed us to completely eliminate outsourcing. We never thought it would happen that fast," she noted.

The University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation's HIM management had concerns over the impact of such a broad speech recognition deployment on their physicians and transcription staff, but in retrospect found the EXSpeech system a perfect fit. "The beauty of the EXSpeech system is that it can be easily deployed behind the scenes without impacting physicians. We were able to train transcriptionists, and then simply select groups of physicians to switch over to speech recognition," Schumacher said.

### Optimized For Transcription Editing

The type of gains realized by UW are achieved not only through conversion of voice-to-text, which takes keyboarding emphasis off of the transcriptionist, but also through the ability to use specialized formatting and editing tools for rapid report completion.

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Nuance has optimized the EXSpeech system's correction software for high-productivity editing. As the editor listens to the audio, the matching recognized text is highlighted onscreen to enhance the ease and accuracy of the editing process. The linkage between voice and text is so tight that transcriptionists can drop the cursor at any point in the document and audio will play from that point on. "Magic" Editing Keys offer on-the-fly editing, including keystrokes that automatically insert punctuation with the appropriate formatting.

*“Dictaphone EXSpeech has eliminated the headaches we faced each day...”*

### **New Role For Transcriptionists: “Language Specialists”**

“We’ve accomplished a great deal of change in a very short period of time. Today, our staff has learned a new set of skills that now allows them to be the ‘language specialists’ they were trained to be. They find the editing of these documents to be rewarding and challenging, rather than spending all of their time typing. We’re producing a more accurate and higher quality product for the physicians, with an eye to improved care,” Whitcomb said.

Initial staff training was conducted among a group of 23 transcriptionists. A Dictaphone Application Training Specialist (ATS) provided group training, as well as ‘train-the-trainer coaching’, so that UW was able to roll-out training among the remaining staff on their own. “We conducted our own training with groups of 6 to 10 individuals for a two hour period,” Whitcomb said. “Then, using Nuance’s ‘training editor documents’, transcriptionists would practice for 15-20 minutes a day for 3 weeks. In two months, we had pretty much trained the entire staff of transcriptionists,” Whitcomb said. “We have also implemented a Speech Coaching program, where we exchange helpful hints and coach each other. We’ve seen a great improvement in staff morale and sense of accomplishment since the program began,” she noted.

The UW transcription group is now editing over 7,500 reports each month. “Dictaphone EXSpeech has eliminated the headaches we faced each day. We now have our water right in front of us,” Whitcomb said.

**Organization:** UW Medical Foundation, the clinical group of the school’s faculty, has nearly 400 physicians located across 35 locations covering a full range of specialties, with high standards for workflow management and quality.

**Challenge:** To accommodate growth while reducing costs of transcription outsourcing and staff overtime while still maintaining quality of reports.

**Strategy:** Implement Dictaphone EXSpeech enterprise-wide speech recognition solution as part of an integrated workflow plan—implement solution rapidly for maximum gain, without impacting physicians.

**Results:** A productivity gain of 25% across the board, and as high as 57% among 74 transcriptionists, who were able to quickly become proficient with system use, allowing UW to discontinue outsourcing 6-months after installation for a saving of nearly a half-million dollars annually.

### **Secure In The Future**

Based on success to date, UW has plans to double the number of physicians using speech recognition. And while the UW Medical Foundation is reaping the rewards of the EXSpeech recognition system, they are also aware of the system’s ability in the future to accommodate Physician Self-Editing, which allows physicians to gain greater control over documentation by bypassing transcription editing. “While we’re quite pleased with the savings generated through speech recognition, we’re aware that in the future we have the option of exploring on a departmental basis other editing alternatives for additional savings, as our volume grows and needs change,” concluded Sandy Schumacher.

**For product information please visit Dictaphone Healthcare Solutions at [www.nuance.com/dictaphone](http://www.nuance.com/dictaphone) or call 888-350-4836.**

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