



## EXSpeech®

**Outagamie County Department of Health & Human Services**  
Uses EXSpeech® Recognition to Continually Grow Without  
Incurring the Costs of Increasing Transcription Staff

**Outagamie County Department of Health & Human Services, Wisconsin, utilizes Dictaphone EXSpeech® from Nuance to generate reports from 10 hours of dictation daily. Transcriptionists have realized substantial productivity gains with the system, while dictators have been granted the option to adopt a convenient mobile voice capture option, or to maintain their preexisting dictation style. Outagamie has realized consistent turnaround time and transcription productivity results throughout the past two years. Report turnaround time typically ranges from 1 to 3 days and remains under 12 hours for all priority reports. The overall transcription productivity increase has been holding strong at 40% which has contributed to a drastic reduction in transcription costs at Outagamie.**

### Speech Recognition Time Has Come

Five years ago, change was needed at Outagamie County's Department of Health & Human Services (Wisconsin) in order to accommodate rapid growth in medical documentation. However, their legacy dictation system lacked the technology to help drive this expanding social services organization into the future. Prior to implementing Dictaphone EXSpeech, Kathy Watters, Management Assistant, recalls, "We were not in a good situation; growth in our physician and social work staff had outpaced our transcription department, many times leaving us with a two week backlog of reports. For every four new social workers who joined our organization, we had to add one new support position, and that was simply impossible with our budget."

### New Productivity While Maintaining Existing Workflow

The solution to Outagamie's pressing budgetary problem proved to be Dictaphone's EXSpeech Recognition, a transcriptionist-assisted, back-

### Highlights

- 10 hours of dictation per day is recognized and edited through EXSpeech®
- Report turnaround time has been reduced from up to 2 weeks and now ranges from 1 to 3 days
- Priority reports are turned around in less than 12 hours
- Transcription productivity gain of 40% overall, with some individuals correcting one minute of dictation in merely one minute



ground recognition system. As part of Dictaphone's Enterprise Express dictation and transcription management workflow solution, EXSpeech provided Outagamie with a comprehensive and complete documentation production and distribution system. The EXSpeech system's ability to accurately recognize telephone based dictation makes it a perfect match for Outagamie; the transition to a speech recognition driven solution was seamless for caregivers. Watters indicated that initially the objective was to "offer the same phone-in dictation capability of our past dictation system". Outagamie was then able to offer mobile voice capture devices to dictators in order to enable optimum convenience. Currently, there are plans to incorporate use of Dictaphone's PDA based digital voice capture devices, GoMDs®, in a wireless environment.

### Aggressive Roll-Out

Outagamie's technology rollout plan began with the implementation of the core Enterprise Express dictation platform, followed a few months later by the deployment of the EXSpeech Recognition System. Initially, Watters selected ten transcriptionists to begin training on EXSpeech's Correction Client software. In groups of five, the software was then rolled out to a total of twenty transcriptionists. Providers dictate as they always have and voice is digitally recorded within the Enterprise Express system, and reports that have been designated for speech recognition are automatically routed through EXSpeech

software, then forwarded to transcriptionists in a text-format as part of the normal workflow. Rather than typing from scratch, transcriptionists save significant time using specialized correction tools to format and edit the report to completion.

### Substantial Productivity Gains

Less than six months from time of installation, reports from 41 of Outagamie's 150 dictators were created using the EXSpeech Recognition system, with 20 of their 32 transcriptionists editing. Outagamie has been able to ramp-up its usage of speech recognition steadily, and now has 70 dictators utilizing the system and 23 transcriptionists. Outagamie is able to use Dictaphone's specialized Mental Health language model which enables extremely accurate recognition, and therefore significant productivity gains. Five psychiatrists at Outagamie speak with Indian accents and all are currently enrolled in EXSpeech and are realizing excellent recognition accuracy.

The gains attained with EXSpeech have been holding strong over the past two years, averaging 40% for overall transcriptionist productivity. As a direct result of productivity improvements, report turnaround time is down from as much as two weeks to within 1 to 3 days from time of dictation. Priority reports are turned around within 12 hours. Transcriptionists edit 10 hours of dictation every day resulting in about 2,000 speech recognized reports per month. Reports produced by transcriptionists include progress notes, letters, initial assessments, treatment plans, and on-call reports.

### Specialized Editing Tools Produce Positive Transcriptionist Attitudes

The Dictaphone EXSpeech correction software has been optimized for use by transcriptionists. Complete synchronization of audio playback with on screen text allows transcriptionists to place the cursor anywhere in the text report and hear the original playback, facilitating rapid correction. Further contributing to correction speed, transcriptionists can utilize several "hot keys", including inserting punctuation on the fly.

*“After a bit of training and use, transcriptionists were surprised to see they were able to accomplish more, much faster, with speech recognition editing”*

“Initially, transcriptionists had their concerns... After a bit of training and use, transcriptionists were surprised to see they were able to accomplish more, much faster, with speech recognition editing,” Watters said. In response to life with EXSpeech, Watters claims that “we can’t imagine it any other way”.

Outagamie’s transcriptionists concur, and are now very positive about editing speech recognized documents. “It took about two weeks before I felt completely comfortable with EXSpeech editing tools,” said Jamie Kempen, Transcriptionist. “Attitude is everything when it comes to change. In addition to transcription we are responsible for other duties, and we’re doing a combination of speech recognition editing and straight transcription. So, we now have a lot of variety, but if I could, I’d be happy doing 100% speech recognition editing. I accomplish much more that way,” Kempen said.

Kempen is Outagamie’s top performing transcriptionist and Watters was doubtful that her stellar performance could be improved upon, even with speech recognition. Her editing to dictation time ratio is 1:1 (i.e. she is able to edit one minute of dictation in the same amount of time). This impressive ratio can be compared to conventional “good” transcription benchmarks; it typically takes 3-4 minutes to transcribe per dictated minute.

**Organization:** Outagamie County, Wisconsin, Department of Health & Human Services is a county social services agency consisting of six divisions: Aging & Long Term Support; Child Support/Economic Support; Children, Youth & Families; Mental Health; Public Health; and Youth & Family Services. The Mental Health Division consists of five outpatient services units providing assessments, psychological evaluations, outpatient counseling, community support programming and treatment, case management services, and crisis intervention.

**Challenge:** How to accommodate a growing dictator population without having to add the costs associated with adding support staff.

**Strategy:** Implement Dictaphone’s EXSpeech® enterprise-wide speech recognition solution as part of an integrated workflow plan.

**Results:** Productivity gains averaging 40% across all Transcriptionists; turnaround time reduced from an excess of 2 weeks, to less than 3 days. Priority reports are now created in under 12 hours.

### Five Years, Growing Stronger

“In our organization, staff are required to dictate notes for each patient encounter,” Kathy Watters said. “It was simply unacceptable for our social workers and mental health professionals to have to wait for reports... Today, we have the information when and where we need it, with room for growth thanks to the productivity benefits of speech recognition,” Watters concluded.

“We weren’t looking at decreasing our staff, but rather, our goal was to increase their productivity, and reduce the cost of adding new support staff,” Watters said. After five years of successfully accomplishing their goals, Watters sees Outagamie as well positioned for the future.

**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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