



eScription

Carle Clinic Increases Transcription Volume While Decreasing Costs Using eScription Software for Computer Aided Medical Transcription

Carle Clinic Association, based in Urbana, Illinois, is one of the largest private physician groups in the country and works in partnership with Carle Foundation Hospital, a 300 bed not-for-profit hospital. Both organizations take pride in the Carle name and its strong tie to the surrounding community.

With a plan to transition to an EMR in 2004, Carle Clinic anticipated a decrease in paper records and a significant increase in medical transcription. When the Clinic analyzed the impact of this increase on an already full workload, the organization realized that its current structure was not sustainable; it needed to find a more streamlined and cost-effective approach. Yet, any new system could not compromise on report quality or turnaround time in support of patient care.

Increased Demand Controlled with Computer Aided Medical Transcription

Carle Clinic's goal was to improve the productivity of each medical transcriptionist (MT) and thereby increase the overall transcription capacity of its in-house staff. This would reduce considerably its outsourcing requirements and associated costs. Carle Clinic selected the eScription software in 2005.

"In discussions to move to an EMR, certain issues we had with our transcription processes were brought to light," said Tricia Truscott, HIM Director of Carle Clinic. "We were spending a lot of money for a system that was not able to handle the influx of dictation we expected from the transition to an EMR. We did not have the resources to increase our staff of MTs, and we wished to reduce the money we were spending on outsourcing."

The technology at the heart of the eScription platform is called computer aided medical transcription (CAMT), an approach proven to improve

Highlights

- Within one year, the transcription department decreased costs by over \$1 million
- In-house transcription volume increased 30%
- Document turnaround time reduced from approximately four days to an average of less than 12 hours
- 90% decrease in the number of "blanks" going back to clinicians, contributing to a more efficient workflow and faster time to signature.



the productivity of MTs and thereby deliver significant cost savings to the healthcare organization. With CAMT, powerful background speech recognition technology converts the spoken word to written text from models developed solely from the medical transcription environment, and employs contextual information to create high quality first drafts. The software interprets and formats dictations in order to transcribe what a clinician intends to be in a document and not necessarily what he or she has said. For instance, when a clinician dictates “HPI,” he or she will likely mean “History of Present Illness.” The formatted documents are produced in the style set up and approved by each healthcare organization.

The eScription client software makes the editing process as fast and efficient as possible with features such as shortcut keystrokes and audio speed controls. The MTs’ edits deliver important, automatic feedback that continuously enhances the speech recognition engine, enabling it to provide increasingly better drafts over time. A single administrative console helps supervisors manage the complete clinical documentation process.

Rise in Volume with Significant Savings

With the CAMT system, Carle Clinic is currently processing more than 47 million lines of transcription per year, an increase of 19 million since implementation. The software is used by more than 650 clinicians across the healthcare system, covering work types ranging from clinical notes to correspondence to emergency room reports. The speech recognition yield is at 92%, a number that continues to grow.

Additionally, the Clinic’s in-house transcription department has been able to increase its capacity from 13.3 million lines a year to more than 19 million lines a year. It is handling this work with four fewer FTEs. The ability to handle more in-house transcription volume meant that Carle was able to cut transcription costs by 16% within one year of using the eScription software.

Enterprise-wide Consistency and Efficiency

As part of the transition and with a focus on increasing productivity, the Clinic worked with its eScription installations team to develop a style guide for consistent formatting. Clinicians now work with only a few standard templates rather than with the many different ones previously used, adding to report consistency and efficiency in the EMR.

The organization reevaluated its in-house compensation plan and moved to a production-based system, motivating MTs to take advantage of the product’s editing tools. Since adopting the eScription platform, MT productivity has increased more than 100% and continues to rise. Truscott noted, “eScription offered the most advanced technology. No other software available was as sophisticated to handle our needs across the enterprise.” Across transcription groups, overall MT productivity has doubled.

“We’ve been able to reduce turnaround time, reduce our dependence on outside transcription vendors, increase physician satisfaction, and deliver impressive financial results.”

— Tricia Truscott
HIM Director of Carle Clinic

“It is gratifying to be recognized with a Million Dollar Award, and know that all the hard work being done by your transcription team has paid off not only for them but for the organization.”

— Mary Britton

*Manager, Central Dictation,
Carle Foundation Hospital*

Reduced Turnaround Time

On average, document turnaround time went from approximately four days to under 12 hours. One reason for this was the standardization of formatting and subsequent reduction of templates used by Carle Clinic clinicians. Under the new system, fewer mistakes can be made by either clinicians or MTs leading to more consistent documents and faster turnaround time.

Improved Internal Processes

The implementation of the eScription system has helped improve internal processes as well. For example, prior to CAMT, many MTs had difficulty deciphering certain clinicians' dictations, and back-and-forth revisions delayed completion and signature. According to Truscott, “After implementing eScription, we really noticed a significant improvement with the whole transcription process. As a result of the accurate drafts, blanks going back to the clinician were reduced by 90%.”

Million Dollar Success

Each year, the eScription Million Dollar Savings Award is presented to healthcare provider organizations that demonstrate savings of at least one million dollars or that reach a new level of million dollar savings using this

Challenge: Anticipating a significant increase in medical transcription volume, Carle Clinic needed to find a streamlined, cost-effective solution that would not compromise report quality or turnaround time.

Solution: Carle executives elected to implement the eScription on-demand platform for computer aided medical transcription (CAMT), a solution based on the premise that it's faster to edit than to type. Rather than following a traditional transcription process, powerful background speech recognition software turns clinicians' dictations into accurate, fully formatted draft documents that MTs quickly review and edit, often doubling productivity.

Results: Since implementation, Carle Clinic has saved over \$2 million in transcription costs, increased MT productivity by over 100%, increased its in-house volume by 30%, and reduced document turnaround time from four days to less than 12 hours.

on-demand CAMT solution. In 2008, Carle Clinic was recognized for saving over \$2 million since adopting the eScription platform.

“Carle is very pleased with the results of our partnership with eScription,” stated Truscott. “We've been able to reduce turnaround time, reduce our dependence on outside transcription vendors, increase physician satisfaction, and deliver impressive financial results.” Mary Britton, Manager, Central Dictation at Carle Foundation Hospital added, “It is gratifying to be recognized with a Million Dollar Award, and know that all the hard work being done by your transcription team has paid off not only for them but for the organization.”

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