



eScription

Health Alliance Turns Around a Transcription Problem
with eScription Platform for Computer Aided Medical Transcription

In 2001, the corporate transcription department of Health Alliance in Cincinnati, Ohio was drowning from an increased volume of medical transcription. In particular, an increase in Emergency Department dictations added to an already busy workload. Cost control was also a growing concern.

A consortium of seven major hospitals, the Health Alliance is the largest and leading health system in the tri-state area of Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. One transcription department of 110 full-time medical transcriptionists (MTs), plus outsourced contractors as needed, provide transcription services for the entire Health Alliance system.

Speech Recognition Solves Complex Transcription Issue

The problem in transcription was complex and multi-faceted as Sherry Doggett, Director of Corporate Transcription at the Health Alliance explains: "Our Information Systems and Technology (IS and T) administration and I had committed to a cost control regime. At the same time, I faced pressure from physicians to speed turnaround time of dictated documents. Curiously, even if I could have hired more MTs, good ones were not easy to find." To address its growing challenge, the Health Alliance selected the eScription platform in August 2002.

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

Highlights

- 66% reduction in turnaround time for transcription
- Doubling of MT productivity, with some MTs achieving a three-fold increase in lines per hour
- Shortened training time for MTs
- Clinicians complimentary of the new system because no change to their workflow



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.

Enterprise-wide Success

Today, the eScription solution is processing dictation from more than 1,600 clinicians at the Health Alliance. Work types processed through the eScription system include Procedure Notes, Discharge Summaries, ER Follow-Up and Radiology. The system is being used in more than 14 specialty groups across the consortium of hospitals.

Turnaround time is now averaging 10 hours—a period that people expect—down from a high of 36-40 hours. According to Doggett, “Since implementing the eScription solution at Health Alliance, the corporate transcription team has doubled its productivity on average with some MTs achieving a three-fold increase in lines per hour.” As a result, the organization

has decreased its use of external MTs, and has saved over \$4 million in transcription costs. Moreover, it has decreased the cost of external MTs because of the streamlined process.

“Superior First Draft Documents”

The Health Alliance had an overall business goal to achieve an increase in transcription productivity and to reduce the cost per line. Four system requirements were also established and addressed by the eScription system:

- First drafts must have highly accurate dictation content
- First drafts must be correctly formatted
- Physicians do not change the way they have to dictate
- MTs have easy-to-use editing tools to enhance productivity

The Health Alliance evaluated the quality of the first draft documents on two dimensions, content and formatting. The team understood that the fewer edits that had to be made either to content or to formatting, the quicker the transcription process would be. “We carefully evaluated options and the eScription platform proved superior in the first draft documents it produced through its speech processing component,” stated Ms. Doggett.

For example, if a clinician dictates: “Exam...vital signs...two twelve...eighty eight and regular...thirteen...BP one forty one hundred and one thirty five ninety five,” the software can output:

PHYSICAL EXAM: VITAL SIGNS: Weight 212, pulse 88 and regular, respiration 13, blood pressure is 140/100, 132/95.

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Clinician Workflow Uninterrupted

Previously, some doctors at the Health Alliance had used other, real-time speech recognition products and were not happy about the way they had to train the system, or the way that they had to dictate in a certain way. “We knew from experience that they would not want to change their behavior, and therefore, we wanted to be sure that the solution we selected was, in effect, transparent to the clinicians up front,” Ms. Doggett continued. Because the Health Alliance is a hospital consortium and many doctors work and dictate from different sites, the diction/ transcription interface needed to work consistently from any location. According to Ms. Doggett, “With the eScripton system in place, the corporate transcription team is well within its prescribed times and physicians are much happier.”

Quicker MT Training

The eScripton implementation also helped the Health Alliance shorten its training period for new MTs. When MTs can see a draft document while listening to the associated audio, they have a better sense of how the elements of a medical record fit together, and they become better transcribers and editors faster than with traditional typing. Another benefit of eScripton CAMT at Health Alliance is that

Challenge: Overwhelmed by an increased transcription volume, Health Alliance was searching for a transcription solution that would improve the transcription process, reduce turnaround times, and meet cost control requirements.

Solution: Health Alliance executives elected to implement the eScripton 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 installing the eScripton platform, Health Alliance has reduced turnaround time by 66%, saved over \$4 million in transcription costs, and doubled MT productivity.

it saved the jobs of qualified MTs who, as a result of hand injuries, could edit productively but could not type.

Million Dollar Success

Each year, the eScripton 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 on-demand CAMT solution. In 2006, Health Alliance was recognized for saving \$4 million since adopting the eScripton platform.

For product information please visit Nuance Healthcare at www.nuance.com/healthcare or call 888-350-4836.

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