Career Role and Responsibilities and Tools of Transcription

Lesson 1

ASSIGNMENT 1: THE TRANSCRIPTION CAREER AND ITS TOOLS

Before you begin this assignment, read Chapter 1 in your textbook, *Medical Transcription: Techniques and Procedures.*

Assignment 1 provides you with information about the skills and ethical and legal responsibilities of being a medical transcriptionist. Medical transcriptionists are very valuable members of the healthcare team! Before embarking on your new career, use your time in the program to develop the basic skills and attributes listed below, which are required of medical transcriptionists.

- High school equivalency for English, including spelling and grammar
- Ability to type at least 45 words per minute (wpm)
- Experience creating, saving, formatting, copying, and pasting documents in computer software
- Ability to use the Internet to research items
- Competence in sending and receiving emails with attachments
- Attention to detail
- Interest in a non-hands-on career in medicine

Job Opportunities and Expectations

With healthcare reimbursement constantly changing, thorough and accurate documentation simply can't be overlooked. Medical transcriptionists are in demand to assist with electronic medical record maintenance and to create and prepare

the associated documents needed for correct billing and reimbursement. This course is just a stepping stone to what can be a very lucrative career! The need for medical transcriptionists is going to increase in the future as more tasks become computerized.

As members of the medical team, medical transcriptionists may work with the following professionals:

- Medical administrative assistants
- Medical office administrators
- Medical scribes
- Registered health information administrators
- Registered health information technicians

Skills

Medical transcriptionists aren't typists! Instead, they're expected to

- Correctly format documents
- Understand medical content, drugs, and disease processes
- Spell accurately and use English grammar, structure, and style
- Be proficient in medical terminology
- Be competent in the use of software and keyboarding
- Identify errors both on screen and in print

On page 6 of your textbook, a sample position description is provided. Review Figure 1-1 to obtain a better idea of what working as a medical transcriptionist is like. *Note:* Keep in mind that typing speed is meaningless if the copy isn't perfect. Your ongoing goal as a medical transcriptionist should be to strive for accuracy.

Medical Transcriptionist Association

The *Association for Health Documentation Integrity* (*AHDI*) is the largest association in the world for medical transcriptionists. The mission of AHDI is to promote the integrity of healthcare documentation through education, advance the profession, and protect patients. The organization has drafted the *Medical Transcriptionist's Bill of Rights,* which can be found in Figure 1-2 on page 9 of your textbook. The AHDI also encourages membership at both student and professional levels, and provides avenues for certification.

Ethical and Legal Responsibilities

As members of the healthcare team, medical transcriptionists are expected to uphold and adhere to specific standards of conduct. Note that ethics aren't laws. Instead, ethics refer to the ways in which professionals from any industry are expected to behave and conduct themselves as representatives of a particular profession. Transcriptionist organizations publish their own codes of ethics. For example, on page 13 of your textbook, Figure 1-4 provides the *Code of Ethics* from the Medical Transcription Industry Association (MTIA).

One important aspect of medical transcription is maintaining confidentiality. In 1996, Congress passed the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* (*HIPAA*). HIPAA requires all healthcare providers to safeguard a patient's *protected health information* (*PHI*). HIPAA regulations outline expectations for written and transmitted information. You can review additional HIPAA regulations on pages 14–15 in your textbook.

Healthcare organizations have risk management departments, created to prevent situations that can lead to liability. All medical transcriptionists must be aware of their role in risk management and the importance of maintaining patient documentation in a private and secure manner. A vocabulary list pertaining to the legal and ethical aspects of medical transcription can be found on pages 16–17 in your textbook.

Reports and Records

As a medical transcriptionist, you'll prepare medical reports for placement in medical records. *Medical reports* are a part of the medical record that provides documentation about a patient's complete health status, or an individual episode of care. The contents of the medical record must be kept confidential, only to be released to those who need to have the information to support the patient's care. Figure 1-6 on page 22 of your textbook provides a sample authorization form that discloses a patient's confidential information. Guidelines for the release of information are also provided on pages 22–25.

Legally, you'll be responsible only for the accuracy of your transcribed medical reports and for keeping the content of the reports confidential. Other important requirements for medical reports include that they must be

- Signed by the person who dictated the content of the report
- Completed on a timely basis

Professionalism

As integral members of a healthcare team, medical transcriptionists are expected to practice according to identified rules of conduct. Examples of these rules include avoiding gossip, being able to adapt to different situations, and respecting other transcriptionists. More information on professional behaviors can be found on page 27 in your textbook.

Self-Check 1

At the end of each section of *Medical Transcription 2,* you'll be asked to pause and check your understanding of what you've just read by completing a "Self-Check" exercise. Answering these questions will help you review what you've studied so far. Please complete *Self-Check 1* now.

1. The purpose of a medical record is to
   a. document the results of an investigation.
   b. document what nurses do to take care of patients.
   c. communicate with members of the healthcare team.
   d. serve as an electronic database used to track results of tests.

2. Any part of a person's health history that's collected by a healthcare provider and that's maintained or transmitted by electronic media is called _____.

3. Which senses are used when performing medical transcription?
   a. Touch and smell
   b. Sight and hearing
   c. Sight and smell
   d. Taste and sight

4. *True or False?* All medical transcriptionists are required to join the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (ADHI).

5. A certified medical transcriptionist (CMT) desires to become a fellow of the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI). What must the medical transcriptionist do to obtain this designation?
   a. Apply to take the registered medical transcriptionist (RMT) examination first.
   b. Pass the CMT examination with a grade of 85%.
   c. Complete 30 hours of continuing education.
   d. Become involved in civic, association, and community activities.

6. A document with health information is being *de-identified,* which means that the information is removed, or _____, from the document.

(*Continued*)

Self-Check 1

7. A medical transcriptionist has a list of documents to prepare. Which document must be completed within 24 hours?

   a. Operative report
   b. Consultation report
   c. Discharge summary
   d. Physical examination

8. A medical transcriptionist is applying for a position at a medical center. Which of the following attributes or behaviors could cause the interviewer to question the medical transcriptionist's professionalism?

   a. Wearing a business suit
   b. Completed 10 hours of continuing education
   c. Stating that the best way to learn about a company is through employee gossip
   d. Having a track record of completing assignments on time with a 0% error rate

9. Even though a medical transcriptionist is able to complete 130 lines per hour, the *true* test of quality work is _____.

10. A medical transcriptionist is learning new words and phrases. What does the textbook specifically recommend medical transcriptionists do to ensure they retain the information they're learning?

    a. Make flashcards.
    b. Repeat the information aloud.
    c. Carefully document the information in a notebook.
    d. Share the information with fellow transcriptionists through an email.

Check your answers with those on page 85.

ASSIGNMENT 2: EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Before you begin this assignment, read Chapter 2 in your textbook, *Medical Transcription: Techniques and Procedures*.

The use of dictation machines has improved the medical transcriptionist's speed, so that he or she has the ability to complete needed medical reports faster. A variety of machines are being used. Some of these machines are desktop models, while others feature a software interface. Others, such as the one shown in Figure 2-1 on page 37 of your textbook, use voice processing systems.

Computer technology and equipment are constantly changing. As a medical transcriptionist, you must be as current as possible with the types of equipment used for dictation, computer hardware, software, and storage. To begin, spend a few minutes and review the vocabulary list on pages 56–58 of your textbook.

Equipment

Medical transcriptionists use computers to prepare medical reports. The ideal computer should have a mouse, keyboard, sound card, network connection, and monitor. The *sound card* is used to hear the dictation, and the *network connection* is needed for access to the Internet as well as to being able to receive and send emails and completed reports.

The quality of a computer is usually only as good as the software. Without software, a computer is just another machine. Every computer has an *operating system* that makes the machine work. The most common operating system is Windows. *Word-processing software* is used to key, format, and edit dictation. Software should have the additional features of *text expansion* (explained in Figure 2-6 on page 40 of your textbook) and the ability to autocorrect. *Tip:* Be sure to read your text expanders before finalizing your documents!

Autocorrect is a feature in which only part of a word is typed into the program and the program will automatically complete the word. This is a timesaving tool, but it can cause and

introduce errors into your transcriptions if the software doesn't recognize an abbreviation you use, or if the software substitutes another word for an abbreviation. Again, be sure to proofread all documents before finalizing your work.

Other equipment typically used may include shared networks, hard drives, CDs, cloud-based file storage, and printers. It's essential to be familiar with each of these items to store, protect, and deliver your completed documents.

Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the relationship between people and work environments. As a medical transcriptionist, you'll complete your work in a seated position, in front of and using a computer and associated equipment. This type of work environment doesn't support normal body posture and function, which could lead to repetitive stress injuries. Figure 2-10 on page 45 of your textbook provides a diagram of an ergonomically designed workstation.

Dictation

Dictation is a communication skill that impacts the quality of work completed by a medical transcriptionist. *Speech recognition programs* make it possible for a computer system to recognize spoken words and automatically convert the words into text. *Front-end speech recognition* occurs when the spoken word is automatically converted into text. The *back-end speech recognition* approach is similar to the front-end approach, except that the document created is a draft that's then forwarded to the medical transcriptionist to edit and correct for errors before finalizing. The use of these programs isn't intended to replace the need for medical transcriptionists. Instead, it's intended to assist medical transcriptionists complete their work faster and with a higher degree of accuracy. Pages 48–50 of your textbook explain more about dictation, the types of media, and the use of hand/foot controls. Be sure to review this information. Box 2-1 on page 51 provides a list of *Dictation Hints* that are also helpful.

Preparation is key when transcribing. Page 52 lists 10 suggestions to help you organize and plan your work before beginning to transcribe. However, even the best prepared and trained medical transcriptionist can run into issues with dictation. Table 2-1 on page 51 provides a quick troubleshooting guide to use if problems with dictation occur.

Other Areas to Consider

Medical transcriptionists may also use other equipment such as fax machines and digital scanners. It's important to review the information about these devices on pages 53–55 in your textbook.

Self-Check 2

Questions 1–5: Match the following terms with the corresponding definitions.

_____1. Hardware

_____2. Software

_____3. Flash drive

_____4. Disk

_____5. File server

a. A device that controls access to separately stored files as a part of a multiuser system

b. A magnetic storage device made of rigid material or flexible plastic

c. The physical components of a computer system

d. A portable storage device that plugs into a computer port

e. Programs used to support computer equipment

6. Regardless of the type of medium used to transmit information, _____ software should be used to prevent hacking.

7. After creating a *macro,* what should be done next?

   a. Duplicate it.
   b. Set it to read only.
   c. Save it to autocorrect.
   d. Include it with text expansion applications.

8. Which action ensures data on a disk is readable?

   a. Cleanse disks with a damp cloth.
   b. Place damp disks in the sun to dry.
   c. Stack a new label on a reusable disk.
   d. Paper clip a label to the front of the disk.

(*Continued*)

Self-Check 2

9. *True or False?* An adjustable document holder minimizes head and eye movements to avoid neck strain.

10. A medical transcriptionist is experiencing back and leg pain at work. Which action should be taken to diminish this discomfort and possibly avoid this pain in the future?

    a. Place the feet flat on the floor.
    b. Place a support between the shoulder blades.
    c. Adjust the seat to ensure adequate arm height.
    d. Obtain a chair with a seat pan that slopes forward.

11. For the medical technologist, _____ systems can be helpful.

12. What should a medical technologist do if a word is garbled in dictation?

    a. Increase the tone control.
    b. Decrease dictation speed.
    c. Decrease the tone control.
    d. Look up the word in a reference book.

13. *True or False?* While transcribing dictation, a medical transcriptionist should complete punctuation as a *final* step in the document creation.

14. What is an advantage of using a digital scan to transmit a medical report?

    a. Uses a standard cover sheet
    b. Uses a password to retrieve the document
    c. Can be integrated with a personal computer
    d. Can send the same document to several email addresses

Check your answers with those on page 85.