

**STARK STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
OCCUPATION AND PROGRAM FACT SHEET**

WHAT DOES A MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONIST DO?

A medical transcriptionist is a professional who interprets and transcribes medical dictation by physicians and other healthcare professionals into a complete and accurate report, either printed or electronic. The main job duties include:

- Transcribe a variety of reports, such as operative reports, discharge summaries, consultations, history and physicals, radiology and pathology reports, progress notes, letters, etc.
- Utilize reference materials, including the Internet
- Review and edit reports for grammar and clarity
- Comply with specific standards that apply to the style of reports
- Edit machine translated text, if applicable

IS THE MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION CAREER FIELD RIGHT FOR ME?

Making a decision about a career is a difficult one. This field requires a strong practical knowledge of medical language related to anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, laboratory medicine, etc. If you have reasonable keyboarding skills, good hearing acuity and listening ability and you have a strong interest in medical language and excellent English language skills, a career in medical transcription may be right for you!

WHERE DO MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONISTS WORK AND WHAT ARE THE WORKING CONDITIONS?

Medical transcriptionists work in numerous settings-hospitals, transcription companies, pathology laboratories, radiology departments, physician's offices, multi-specialty clinics, etc. Many transcriptionists work in their homes as independent contractors, subcontractors, and home-based employees. Working from home usually requires 1-2 years of work experience before being at the skill level needed to work independently. Working conditions are usually flexible, covering day shift, afternoon and midnight shifts at hospitals, also some weekends and holidays. Medical transcriptionists spend the majority of their working independently and sitting for long hours, often in a high-pressure environment due to the need to meet productivity and quality standards. A high level of concentration for extended periods of time is vital.

WHAT IS THE JOB OUTLOOK FOR MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONISTS:

According to Occupational Outlook Handbook for 2006-2007, a career as a Medical transcriptionist is projected to grow faster than average for all occupations through 2014. This demand is based on the growing and aging population and the continued need for electronic documentation within facilities.

HOW WILL SPEECH RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY AFFECT THE FUTURE OF MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION?

Use of speech recognition technology will become more prevalent as the technology becomes more sophisticated. However, machine translated reports usually contain errors that need to be edited by professionals with language skills. The medical transcriptionist, working in an environment using speech recognition, is responsible for editing the draft of a report for mistakes in translation, punctuation, and grammar. They also check the report for consistency, possible medical errors and style. Medical transcriptionists continue to be the best qualified to do this work.

HOW FLEXIBLE IS THE PROGRAM IN MEETING INDIVIDUAL SCHEDULING NEEDS:

The Medical Transcription Certificate program is a daytime program. A new group (20) of students starts the program every fall semester. Some students choose to reduce their workload by taking general study courses prior to formal program entry. These options are important considerations for those whose work or family responsibilities might otherwise prevent them from pursuing a degree. After meeting the pre-requisites, The Medical Transcription Certificate program at SSCT is a 1-year certificate program. Students start program classes in the fall and finish in the summer. Core MT courses are held during the day, but are scheduled such that students can usually still maintain a work schedule. General study courses are available during the day and night. Students are required to spend some time outside of class time to complete transcription assignments.

DOES THE PROGRAM HAVE A CLINICAL COMPONENT?

During the summer semester, students spend 36 hours in a practicum experience. A variety of sites are utilized such as hospitals, social service agencies, ambulatory care clinics, and physician offices. Determining factors of placement include the student's GPA, grades earned in the medical transcription courses and attendance. Students are placed in a practicum site according to availability of sites.

Students are required to complete health requirements, obtain a background check and pay liability insurance before starting the program due to the requirements of the clinical sites/employers. **Students should be aware that due to clinical sites requiring background checks, information discovered may delay or prevent clinical education opportunities and entry into the profession.**

WILL I BE REQUIRED TO TRAVEL?

The sites utilized for clinical experiences are generally within a 75 mile driving distance of Stark State College. Students are responsible for travel and food expenses.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER COMPLETION OF THE MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM?

The student receives a certificate of completion from the college for completing the program. The Career Services Department meets with the students to help with creating resumes, cover letters, interviewing techniques, etc. The student can place their resume on the College Central Network, which potential employers can access.

WHAT ABOUT CERTIFICATION?

The American Association of Medical Transcription (AAMT) offers an entry level certification exam, RMT (registered medical transcriptionist) for recent graduates of medical transcription education programs. After 2 years of acute-care transcription experience, you can sit for the CMT (certified medical transcriptionist) certification examination. See the AAMT website for additional information regarding certification.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Contact: Darlene S. Horn, RHIA, Department Head at dhorn@starkstate.edu or call 330-966-5458, ext. 4296. Also visit the following websites:

- American Association of Medical Transcription - www.aamt.org
- Occupational Outlook Handbook - www.bls.gov/oco
- MT Desk resource - www.MTDesk.com
- MT Jobs resource - www.MTJob.com