

Medical Transcriptionists, also called **Medical Transcribers** and **Medical Stenographers**, listen to dictated recordings made by physicians and other healthcare professionals and transcribe them into medical reports, correspondence, and other administrative material. They generally listen to recordings on a special headset, using a foot pedal to pause the recording when necessary, and key the text into a personal computer or word processor, editing as necessary for grammar and clarity. The documents they produce include discharge summaries, history and physical examination reports, operating room reports, consultation reports, autopsy reports, diagnostic imaging studies, and referral letters. Medical transcriptionists return transcribed documents to the dictator for review and signature, or correction. These documents eventually become part of patients' permanent files.

To understand and accurately transcribe dictated reports into a format that is clear and comprehensible for the reader, medical transcriptionists must understand medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, diagnostic procedures, and treatment. They also must be able to translate medical jargon and abbreviations into their expanded forms. To help identify terms appropriately, transcriptionists refer to standard medical reference materials—both printed and electronic; some of these are available over the Internet. Medical transcriptionists must comply with specific standards that apply to the style of records, in addition to the legal/ethical requirements involved with keeping patient records confidential.

Experienced transcriptionists spot mistakes or inconsistencies in a medical report and check back with the dictator to correct the information. Their ability to understand and correctly transcribe patient assessments and treatments reduces the chance of patients receiving ineffective or even harmful treatments and ensures high quality patient care. Medical transcriptionists who work in physicians' offices and clinics may have other office duties, such as receiving patients, scheduling appointments, answering the telephone, and handling incoming and outgoing mail.

The American Association for Medical Transcription (AAMT) awards the voluntary designation, Certified Medical Transcriptionist (CMT), to those who earn passing scores on written and practical examinations. Every 3 years, CMTs must earn continuing education credits to be recertified.

Salary Information:

- Medical Transcriptionist Certificate
\$20,750 Median Salary (Follow-up Study, Monroe Community College Graduates, 2008)
- ***Medical Transcriptionist for the Rochester, New York area:***
\$34,200 Median Salary Range (Career One Stop, 2008)

[*Salary varies based on education/advanced degree, work-experience & setting/location.]

Additional Information:

- American Association of Medical Transcription: www.aamt.org

