Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) Medical Center Cuts Transcription Cost in Half While Improving TAT and Quality!

CVPH realizes extensive savings by outsourcing transcription to Mediscribes.

Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) Medical Center a regional medical center that’s recognized as a true community resource serving New York State’s Adirondack Mountain region. Located in Plattsburgh, New York, CVPH is the area’s largest employer, with 2,250+ employees working together to achieve their mission to “provide quality health care for the North Country.”

CVPH facilities include a 341-bed acute care hospital with wide array of medical and surgical specialties, along with a 54-bed skilled nursing facility.

Maureen A. Stiefel is the Manager for Transcription Services within the Medical Records Department at CVPH.

The Situation

“The two main reasons CVPH decided to look at outsourcing transcription was to improve our turnaround time to reflect 24/7 patient care and to reduce our cost for medical transcription. One of our challenges with in-house CVPH transcriptionists was to provide a consistent, acceptable turnaround time for our customers. We had situations when we would get backlogged due to staffing issues, internet issues for the home-based transcriptionists and inconsistent volume of dictation on a daily basis. We would also had the other extreme when we would operate on “low census” protocol with running out of work, requiring frequent staff cancellations and supervisors going through a lengthy process following union guidelines for low census staffing. We were not able to recruit transcriptionists for the night shift which had an adverse impact on our turnaround time with no H&Ps, consultations or priorities transcribed between 11:30 PM and 6 AM. Due to cut backs in health care reimbursement, and in anticipation of more cut backs, we analyzed the cost of outsourcing transcription and we realized we were able to cut our costs in half by outsourcing.”
"We had an extremely short time frame of only four weeks from the time the contract was executed with Mediscribes until our go live date. This timeframe included the weeks of Christmas and New Years, which created an even bigger challenge. CVPH ISS/HIM worked closely during the four weeks with Mediscribes on our Project Charter and a comprehensive, detailed Project Plan that was provided by Mediscribes. We worked extensively in our test system to make sure interfaces were working, documents were importing correctly, etc.

Mediscribes came on-site and made a presentation to our transcriptionists about a week after CVPH management met with the transcriptionists and informed them of our outsourcing contract and plans. This was a CVPH decision as we wanted to give our employees (union employees) 30-days notice of the transition and we were under a tight time frame. In hind-sight, we should have had Mediscribes on site during the initial notification to the transcriptionists as they experienced a great deal of stress and uncertainty about what they would do during that week lapse. Mediscribes came on-site the following week and they did quite well to manage our transcriptionist's concerns. It was helpful that the presenter for the meeting was with a Mediscribes representative that had been a transcriptionist herself who had gone through the same. Mediscribes offered flexibility of hours and shifts and offered full-time hours our part time employee. However, most of our transcriptionists opted to take other positions within CVPH.

CVPH currently uses 3M applications in HIM. Due to the integration we have with 3M ChartScript, Dictation/ESA, ChartFact/Locator, ChartView and the interfaces with Soarian, we chose to keep 3M for our transcription/dictation system. Our radiology system is in Siemens Syngo with PowerScribes for front-end and back-end voice-to-text editing. CVPH and Mediscribes' MTs work directly in Syngo through a VPN and listen/edit in Syngo.

We had Mediscribes' support on-site during go live for a few days. This Mediscribes' resource was able to work real-time with the Mediscribes and CVPH team to identify and resolve any issue that arose. Mediscribes had a project office resource on-site to follow-up approximately four weeks into our transition which was helpful. We have had the Transcription Manager for Mediscribes on-site as well."

"We had researched several vendors, and narrowed down the field to two vendors. With all things being equal on references, we prepared a list of pros and cons for each of the two companies. The two main reasons why we chose Mediscribes was our sense that Mediscribes shared the same passion for excellent customer service that we embrace here at CVPH, and that the Mediscribes team was on top of our needs and willing to accommodate and respond quickly. We had good, ongoing communication with the representatives from Mediscribes during the selection process and we were also pleased with the proposed contract that Mediscribes submitted where there were no set up fees, there was a verifiable charge per line for general dictation and charge per report for radiology editing in PowerScribe. Basically, the decision came down to which company we felt would provide ongoing support and who seemed committed to a close partnership with CVPH Medical Center."
"When we went live with Mediscribes, 30-days after notifying our MTs, we had a 3-week backlog in most work types and a 2-day backlog in the priority work types. Mediscribes was able to catch the backlog up within the first week and has stayed within the contracted time since then. The CVPH transcription supervisor worked closely providing feedback to the Mediscribes team. Approximately three months into the transition, report quality has improved to the point we were at with the former CVPH in-house transcriptionists - with a better and more consistent turnaround time.

The main cost-savings has been through elimination of 15.5 FTE employee wages and benefits. However, there are other tangible benefits that have positively impacted our financials, such as:

- No longer needing IT support for the individual transcriptionists with help desk analysis's, PC techs and network specialists.
- Asset Management - the PCs that the transcriptionists had and the 14 spare PCs reserve on-site for the transcriptionists in case the home-based had technical issues and had to work in-house on rare occasions have been redeployed.
- The former Transcription area is now utilized for our Soarian Financials upgrade team.
- Incentive pay, travel and mileage, internet reimbursement and downtime costs for MTs has been eliminated.
- With minimal daily transcription issues, the time spent by the Transcription Supervisor on day-to-day operations is now being spent in revenue generating areas of the HIM Department.

The overall impact for CVPH with our Mediscribes partnership is having a very consistent and amazing turnaround time. All document types are back within our contracted time, or better. We have accomplished our goal to reduce transcription costs, a reduction of one-half of what our cost had been with CVPH in-house transcriptionists. We feel confident that Mediscribes will continue to strive for excellence while serving CVPH."