

e-Perspectives

on the Medical Transcription
Profession

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A Moving Target

Staying abreast of cutting-edge technology in medicine is difficult because it's a moving target even with all the resources at our fingertips these days—powerful computers, high-speed Internet connections, fast search engines, and ready access to the newest pharmaceuticals and latest surgical innovations and medical and diagnostic procedures in thousands of the finest medical journals in the world.

Case in point. Tell me quick: how many *nano-* words do you know? I'm not counting "nanosecond," as in the catchy "I'd do it in a nanosecond" which has largely replaced "I'd do it in a New York minute." Consider some of the new words and phrases from "Nothing Could Be Finer: Nanotechnology in Medicine," Dr. John Dirckx's feature article in this issue. To list just a few terms I noted: nanoart, nanobots, nanodevices, nanoengineers, nanofilter, nanogram, nanolithography, nanomachines, nanomaterials, nanomedical, nanomedicine, nanometer, nanomole, nanomotors, nanonephrology, nanoparticles, nanopores, nanorobotics, nanorobots, nanoscale, nanoshells, nanosieve, nanostructures, nanotechnicians, nanotube, nanotubules, and nanotweezers. Of course, not all new terms in nanotechnology begin with *nano-*, and the quick-reference list of nanotechnology terms included in "What's New in Medicine" includes other new terms used in nanotechnology in medicine culled from Dr. Dirckx's article.

HPI editors do research for a living, and how difficult is it for us to hit the moving target of new terminology in cutting-edge technology? It's a challenge, but knowing *how to do research* is surely the first step to success. Georgia Green's "The Best Things in Life Are Free: How to Use Medical Journal Abstracts" gives us practical tips and how-to suggestions for getting the most from abstracts of medical journal articles. As researchers and practitioners, we can't read everything, but we can certainly skim abstracts of medical journals as a way of targeting our research efforts, and unlike the full texts of many medical journals, access to the abstracts is free. "Medical journal research exposes you to such a variety of information that your knowledge-base grows exponentially with regular use," says Georgia Green.

It's not only medical language that is dynamic, but current usage is also a moving target. Punctuation and grammar are important reference points for current usage. Style and format are essential ingredients in rendering complete and accurate medical documentation. Ellen Drake's article, "A Quick Primer on Hyphens," provides punctuation tips and guidelines for students and practitioners alike. The principles of correct use of hyphens presented in this article cover the bases, and the quick-reference list of some frequently used hyphenated (or not) terms will come in handy for all of us. In addition, the Hyphen Exercise is a challenging self-evaluation test, and immediate feedback is provided with the correct answers.

On the business front, Philip Cohen of PRN Funding, LLC, shares his expertise in financing medical transcription businesses. In "Factoring: Alternative Financing for Medical Transcription Services" he deals with the real-world problem of managing cash-flow problems in today's fast-paced business world.

Rounding out this 55th issue of *e-Perspectives* since its establishment in 1990 is our regular column of "What's New in Medicine"—four pages of new, difficult, and hard-to-find medical words and phrases. Talk about a moving target—medical terminology is certainly that. We try to identify the words and phrases that are going to appear in medical dictation and research in the near future. It's a challenging task. As long ago as 1983-84, Vera Pyle wrote "A Medical Transcriptionist's Fantasy," highlighting the need for medical transcriptionists to know the new terms *before* they appear in dictation. If Vera Pyle were here today, she would think that today's research capabilities do indeed allow us to live out her fantasy.



Sally C. Pitman

Celebrate MT Week by Upgrading Your Skills with *Interpreting ESL Medical Dictation*—

the first product in the new *SUM Program Career Development Series!*

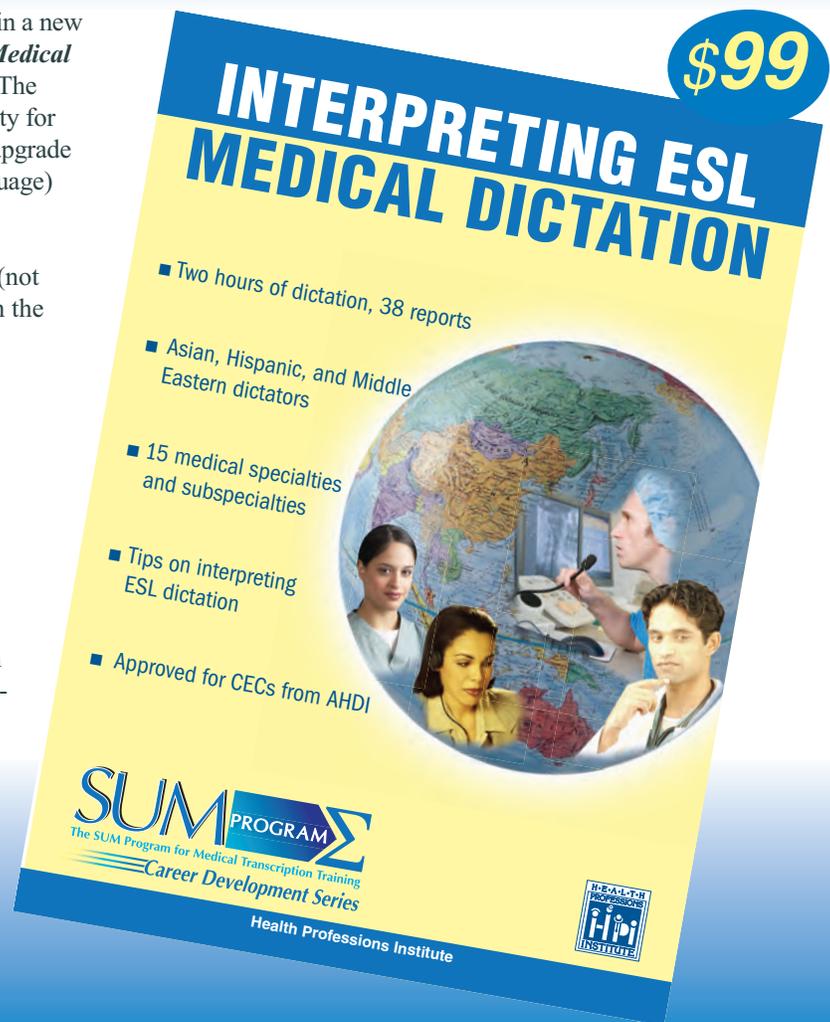
Interpreting ESL Medical Dictation is the first product in a new Career Development Series of *The SUM Program for Medical Transcription Training* by Health Professions Institute. The two-hour dictation unit provides a challenging opportunity for advanced students and experienced transcriptionists to upgrade their skills in interpreting ESL (English as a second language) foreign-accented dictation.

Interpreting ESL Medical Dictation has 38 authentic (not script-read) medical, surgical, and diagnostic reports in the following specialties and subspecialties:

cardiology	gastrointestinal
general surgery	internal medicine
neurology	obstetrics-gynecology
orthopedics	pain management
pediatrics	psychiatry
pulmonary medicine	radiology imaging
rehabilitation	urology
wound management	

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Other news from Health Professions Institute:

We have a new web site at hpisum.com that's simple to use and packed with information.

The next units to be added to *The SUM Program Career Development Series* are radiology and pathology.

Past issues of *e-Perspectives on the Medical Transcription Profession* are easier to access.

We have recently launched a monthly e-newsletter for MT teachers that includes suggestions designed to help teachers become even more effective at their jobs.

We have a new weekly e-letter service for MT students that includes study tips and a short quiz on terminology, anatomy, grammar, editing, professionalism, etc.

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