

How to Discuss Interfacing

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Why an Interface?

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- PAIN POINT: Care Providers lose productivity when typing encounter data straight into an EHR or EMR.
- **ACTION POINT: MTSOs need to proactively engage clinics to give them the option to dictate and place interfaces into the project plan from the beginning.**

Why an Interface?

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- **Key Point:** it's not the EHR as much as the clinic's preference that determines whether transcription will continue being used.
- It is critical to proactively present interface options to clients *before* you become aware that they are looking into EHR systems. By then, it might be too late.

Which EHRs Use Interfaces?

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- **Virtually every EHR** has the capability of interfacing transcribed documents.
- Interfacing transcribed documents *does not* mean the clinic or facility is not meeting meaningful use.
- Healthcare providers are often unaware that their EHR can support a transcription interface. It may be up to you to let them know that!

Sampling of Recent Interfaces

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EHR	Clinic Type	Impact of EHR	Interface Type
Acumen	Renal Group	Full Transcription	HL7
Allscripts	Digestive Health	Full Transcription	HL7
Greenway	Orthopedic	Full Transcription	File Monitor
Centricity	Hospital	Full Transcription	HL7
Meditech	Behavioral Health	Full Transcription	HL7
eMDs	Abdominal Health	Full Transcription	HL7
Care 360	Internal Medicine	Full Transcription	HL7
SRSsoft	Orthopedic	Full Transcription	File Monitor
Epic	Multi-Speciality	Full Transcription	HL7
NextGen	Orthopedic	Full Transcription	File Monitor

What Is An Interface?

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- Simply stated, an interface is a bridge between two systems.
- It is nothing more than a series of connection points between two systems that moves data from one system to another.
- **If the data exists, it can be sent!**

How is the Data Transmitted?

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- Many EHRs use a VPN connection to move data from one system to another.
- Others use a secure FTP set-up.
- Regardless of the connection method, WebChartMD works with the EHR vendor directly to get the connection established.

Types of Interfaces

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- Different EHRs Require Different Types of Interfaces. The two most common are:
 - HL7. Can be used for getting data into the EHR or getting data out of the EHR.
 - File Monitor Utility, or File Import. A simplified method where documents are sent via a secure channel to the client's network, where the EHR imports them into the EHR.

HL7 Messages

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- ❑ Preferred method of communication.
- ❑ Takes the longest time to implement.
- ❑ Robust messaging with guaranteed delivery and notifications on failure.
- ❑ Standards based and has the widest level of adoption.

Interface “Directions”

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- There are two directions in which data can flow with interfaces:
 - ▣ An “Inbound Interface” normally refers to sending data, such as documents, into the EHR. This is the more common interface to be created.
 - ▣ An “Outbound interface” normally refers to getting data out of the EHR. This is used when a client wants to provide you with patient demographics in real time rather than from a faxed list.

The Interface Specifications Document

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- Normally provided by the EHR / EMR vendor.
- Determines exactly how they wish to send and receive messages.
- Varies from one EHR to another.

How To Approach Your Clients (Step 1)

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- Talk about how an EHR is *good*. They do have many benefits.
- Transcription really complements an EHR by enabling efficient entry of high quality patient data into an EHR.
- Mention costs – no costs from the transcription end, but potential costs from the EHR.
- Identify benefits and cost savings:
 - ▣ Do they have full time staff (scribes) to enter data for the doctors?
 - ▣ Do they use front end speech recognition?
 - ▣ If so, do they QA that work? If they have full time staff to QA, they are probably spending a lot of money on it. If not, their medical documentation probably has errors.
 - ▣ A study at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto found that there was a 23% error rate in reports that were done exclusively using front end speech recognition.

How To Approach Your Clients (Step 2)

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- Present customized flyers provided by WebChartMD and discuss the three key weaknesses in how EHRs manage the clinical documentation workflow (refer to WebChartMD marketing materials):
 - Clinical documentation can take longer on an EHR than dictating a patient note.
 - Clinical documentation on an EHR can negatively impact the patient-doctor dynamic in the exam room.
 - Clinical documentation on an EHR can miss key qualitative information about the patient's health story.

How To Approach Your Clients (Step 3)

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- When speaking with your client or prospect let them know:
 - Your technical team can write both HL-7 and non HL-7 interfaces.
 - Your technical team can write both inbound and outbound interfaces.
 - All interface work will be implemented at no charge for your piece of the interface.
 - You can begin work immediately.
 - Ask for an appointment with the client's EHR rep to begin discussing an interface set-up.

In Summary

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- Transcription along with EHRs should be placed as the future – this is where technology is *moving towards*, not something that is *left behind*.
- There are many new advances, including Partial Dictation, that provide cost savings while enabling dictation.
- Remember – you must be proactive in talking to your clients about setting up a transcription interface to their EHR system *before* they start implementing one.