

e-Perspectives

on the Medical Transcription Profession

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Hope Is On The Way!

Energy, enthusiasm, excitement . . . there is a new spirit in the air. I can feel it and I wasn't even there. The AAMT Annual Meeting in Atlanta in August was electrifying, and everyone felt it. It was like Old Home Week for many attendees who have been members of AAMT since the early 1980s. And the newer members, guests, and vendors felt positive vibes as well. It's a spirit of hope and optimism for the future of the medical transcription profession. What is responsible for this new optimistic view of our future?

Change. New leadership. New ideas. New strength in following our convictions. New respect for education and staff development. A new confidence in ourselves as healthcare professionals. A new belief in our association as more than an idea whose time has come. A belief in AAMT as an agent for positive change. One of the reasons for hope is AAMT's new commitment to quality educational programs for medical transcriptionists and its institution of an approval process for programs that meet the highest professional standards. Finally, hope is on the way!

This is the 49th issue of *Perspectives* magazine which has evolved over 14 years of publication to its present electronic format. As an e-zine, *e-Perspectives* will be available to a wider and wider audience of healthcare professionals who value the substantive original articles we publish. *e-Perspectives* will now be available worldwide to anyone with an Internet connection. The PDF articles may be downloaded and printed by those who want a print copy for reference.

In this issue of *e-Perspectives*, Sidney Moormeister leads with an inspiring article on the need for integrity in the medical transcription profession: "Would You Sell Your Soul? (and How NOT to Make a Workplace Faustian Bargain)." Randy Drake launches a new column on pharmaceuticals, "Dear Drake and Drake: Q&A Rx and OTC." Randy and Ellen Drake, authors of the annual *Saunders Pharmaceutical Word Book*, share their expertise on prescription and over-the-counter drugs. With his characteristic dry wit, Randy tells us right off the bat "Google doesn't spell anything," reminding us it is a search engine and may pull up thousands of misspellings. Renee Priest, in "The Hip Bone's Connected to the Thigh bone," delights us with her clever depiction of how dictating stations for physicians are established. Richard Lederer effectively makes the point that English is the universal language. Joe Weber comes the closest he's ever been to admitting that speech recognition is NOT going to replace medical transcriptionists in our lifetime, which he has long predicted; he describes the process of "back-end recognition" as one that makes use of medical transcriptionists as medical editors and, in some cases, may increase productivity and reduce costs.

Featured in this first issue of *e-Perspectives* is an article by John H. Dirckx, M.D., "Urines Are Cooking: Perspectives on Medical Slang and Jargon," with a two-page spread of terms, "Translation, Please! Medical Slang and Jargon." The article grew out of our recent translation efforts while producing the new course, *The SUM Program Beginning Medical Transcription*, 2nd edition. Dictating physicians use so much medical slang and jargon in their dictation that medical transcriptionists are constantly called upon to know which terms to transcribe verbatim, which ones to translate into formal terms, and which ones to flag. Dr. Dirckx offers a classification of medical slang and suggests guidelines for its management.

Rounding out *e-Perspectives* is the three-page "Update: What's New in Medicine" by Ellen Drake. These and other new terms will appear in *Vera Pyle's Current Medical Terminology*, 10th edition, to be published in Spring 2005.



Sally C. Pitman