

e-Perspectives

on the Medical Transcription
Profession

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Why We Matter

The 20th anniversary conference of MTIA (Medical Transcription Industry Association) took place in Louisville, Kentucky, April 22-25. The stated theme of the conference was "Going the Distance," and the very fact of MTIA's continued existence in this dynamic healthcare marketplace owes a great deal to its providing numerous opportunities for successful networking among medical transcription businesses over the past 20 years. Indeed, the association from the beginning has provided a forum for the many mergers and acquisitions that have consolidated the industry. MTIA leaders now plan a name change to better reflect the association's new alliances, strategic partnerships, member expansion, and possible business certification criteria. According to MTIA President Linda Yaniszewski, MTIA is developing best business practices "for improving the exchange, consistency, security, and quality of clinical documentation to optimize patient care delivery." That will indeed be "going the distance" from that first gathering of eighty-something business leaders over 20 years ago. Just being in the same meeting together then, cordially discussing the industry and agreeing to work together to build an association, seems long ago and far away. We've certainly gone the distance "to expand our voice and capitalize on healthcare market reform," to quote Yaniszewski.

The unofficial but oft-quoted theme of the conference, however, was "Why We Matter." Why do medical transcription companies matter in the current giant multi-billion dollar healthcare marketplace? Unenlightened vendors of speech recognition technology (SRT) continue to make lavish claims that their products will eliminate the need for medical transcription components in future electronic medical records (EMRs). The SRT vendors sell their products to unwitting clinicians who are desperately trying to keep up with requirements and demands and promised claims of efficiency needed in the next generation of high-tech healthcare delivery systems. Enlightened vendors of SRT, however, are partnering with medical transcription business leaders to integrate people with technology and, according to Robin Daigh of MD-IT in *For the Record*, April 13, "present clients with integrated solutions that accommodate the wide variety of documentation workflows."

Medical transcriptionists *matter*, and our participation in new technological developments will secure our future in the industry. Our increased knowledge, advanced education, and continued dedication to good healthcare delivery for the *patient* will provide a value-added feature of the new EMRs.

This is the 57th issue of *Perspectives* magazine (first in print form and now electronic) since 1990. Featured in this issue is Dr. John H. Dirckx's medical article, "Turmoil Within: Perspectives on Irritable Bowel Syndrome," a symptom complex that costs American society more than \$20-30 billion annually.

In "Searching the 'Wild, Wild Web'" Ellen Drake and Georgia Green present an update on more effective Internet research techniques, which all of us necessarily need in order to be more efficient researchers.

Rich Lederer both entertains and enlightens us with two columns in this issue: In Looking at Language, "Under a Spell," he explains why we will never have simplified spelling reform despite the efforts of many orthographers over the years. Another column, Jest for Fun, "The World According to Student Bloopers," will have you laughing off your chair. In the vein of "kids say the darnedest things," high school and college students write them. Scary . . .

A special treat in this issue is Judith Marshall's personal essay, "Totally Hip." It's a humorous look at her own hip replacement surgery and successful rehabilitation.

Rounding out this issue is a 4-page list of new, difficult, or hard-to-find terms in "What's New in Medicine." You can tell we've been searching the Wild, Wild Web!



Sally C. Pitman

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Plain Radiography
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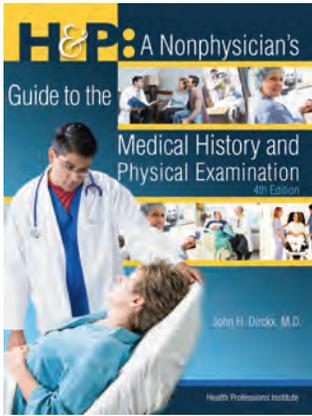
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Transcriptionists Can Learn and Earn . . . CE Credits

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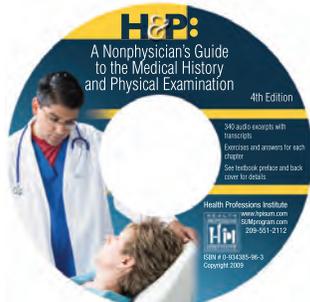
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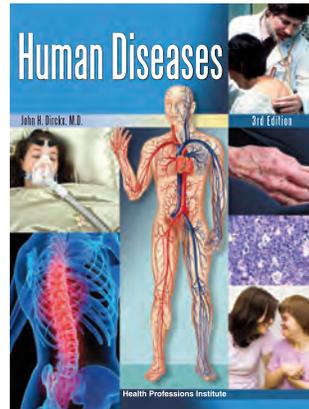
Vera Pyle's Current Medical Terminology, 11th ed.



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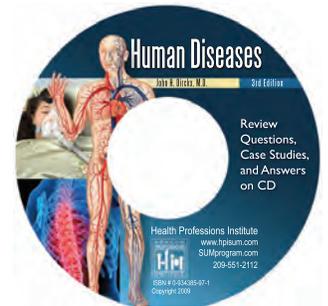
Human Diseases, 3rd ed.



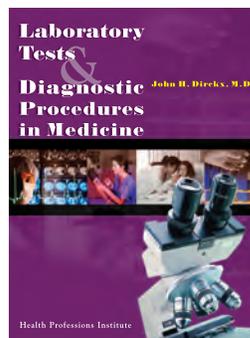
Written by John H. Dirckx, M.D., *Human Diseases* contains the latest information on the diseases most commonly encountered in dictation, including causes, symptoms, diagnostic tests, diagnoses, and treatment regimens.

It includes:

- Chapter outlines
- Learning objectives
- Labeled illustrations
- Special interest boxes on word origins
- Glossary
- Comprehensive index
- Case Study: You're the Doctor, where readers are challenged to make medical and ethical judgments from the physician's perspective.
- The exercises that make *Human Diseases* so valuable for transcriptionists are included on a CD. Students can enter their answers and print out or else submit to the teacher electronically.



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John H. Dirckx, M.D., covers diagnostic studies, including imaging, EEG, EMG, endoscopy, electrophysiology, genetic testing, and more. Includes the lab and path studies that are important to MTs.

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is loaded with readings and exercises in Professional Issues, Style & Usage, Anatomy & Physiology, Medical Terminology, Surgery, Pathophysiology, Laboratory, and Pharmacology, with hundreds of examples. Answers on CD. **Prepare for credentialing exams or earn CE credits. AHDI approved for 147 CECs! Just \$40.**

