

Keystone Kopy

Pennsylvania Association for Medical Transcription – AAMT

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President's Message: "2007: The Year of the Pig!"

Carol Croft, CMT, FAAMT, PAMT President

Okay, I hope I have your curiosity to continue reading. Anyone can write about the traditional new year, making resolutions, a new beginning, starting off with a flurry to make changes in our life. But I thought, let's look at it through a different set of glasses this year.

Of course, the Year of the Pig is for the Chinese New Year. When beginning my research, I was hoping it may be an animal that we think of as something perhaps royal, majestic, loyal... but, definitely, the pig was not on my list to write my inspirational president's message about. However, I continued to research.

Did you realize that people born in the Year of the Pig are considered intellectually curious, honest and tolerant, according to Chinese legend, and can be relied on for their loyalty and often make true friends for life? According to legends of old, pigs are highly regarded for their chivalry and pureness of heart and will often sacrifice their own well-being for the greater good. Also, people born in the Year of the Pig love to read and have a general thirst for knowledge. Their main goal in life is in serving others and, regardless of how difficult the situation, will never waver but will forge ahead in the sure knowledge all will be well. Some of the famous people born in the Year of the Pig include Lucille Ball, Humphrey Bogart, Thomas Jefferson, Ernest Hemingway, Alfred Hitchcock, and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

What does this have to do with the medical transcription profession? Well, maybe nothing; but it is definitely interesting, no doubt, to continuously learn, and definitely a trait that medical transcriptionists have. We will never know everything about our profession! How many people have the ho-hum, same old-same old, dreary, every-day boring job? How many of us can say that we are constantly challenged, maybe to the point of frustration at times?

No doubt, opportunities will arise this year within the State of Pennsylvania, in neighboring states, or nationally that will entice you to attend, or I hope will encourage you to attend. Learn and share your knowledge. Hate to attend meetings? No time? There are multitudes of web sites which offer great continuing education opportunities to learn and AAMT also has

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ongoing web-based programs. But consider this. There is more to attending meetings than just the great knowledge you receive: the opportunities for networking, sharing information, and meeting some super people who belong to the greatest professional there is—in my opinion, that of medical transcription.

I encourage you to be like those born in the Year of the Pig, even if you weren't— to always have a thirst for knowledge. I know I have a greater respect for these animals that I had stereotyped into a certain mindset. What reasons do you have for not attending meetings? Maybe, like my impressions of this animal were misguided that just by being curious to “research” by attending meetings you will find what many of us who love attending meetings have found and enjoy. Not only do we learn at EVERY meeting we have attended, but we also can share our knowledge and curiosity with speakers and other attendees, we can meet new MTs, and can (and do) develop some lifelong friendships.

May the Year of the Pig bring you great joy, good health, and much success!

Carol Croft, CMT, FAAMT
Carolpa48@aol.com

Congratulations!

Kathy Rockel, CMT, FAAMT has made history! She is now our first Speaker of the House of Delegates who is not the current AAMT president. As decided at the 2006 House of Delegates in Boston, with so many issues and exciting changes happening within our profession, the Speaker of the House will be responsible for guiding this fabulous group of leadership with our grass-roots movement.

We congratulate Kathy and know she will pave the way for a fabulous working team of delegates!

The PAMT Fall 2007 Conference Is Less than a Year Away...

The fall 2007 PAMT Annual Workshop has been scheduled! It's sure to be an exciting adventure with interesting perspectives on the various aspects of our field of medical transcription.

DATE: **October 26-27, 2007**

PLACE: Holiday Inn, Harrisburg/Hershey (Grantville)



THEME: *“Carving Out Your Niche in the
Changing World of Medical Transcription”*



This exciting and information-packed conference will definitely be worth your while. We look forward to seeing you there!



First Impressions and the Professional Resume – The Keys to a Successful Interview

By Jean McCarthy, Manager HIM Resources
for Diskriter, Inc. (recruiter@diskriter.com)

When looking for a new job, you might think your opportunity to make a first impression will take place at the interview. I have a different opinion.

As a recruiter, I sift through many resumes on a daily basis. Recruiters are under pressure to fill positions in a timely manner. If a resume is hard to navigate through, has errors, or doesn't have key words or terms relative to industry experience, that resume—I assure you—is sent to the shredder. The resumes I set aside for further action are the ones that have caught my eye. In the eyes of the recruiter, the professional resume is your marketing tool and it creates a “first impression” of you and may indicate your performance on the job.

Here are some pointers in creating your marketing tool, your first impression, the professional resume:

Decide on **resume format** (I prefer the reverse chronological format)

- *Reverse Chronological* – this format is used most often listing most recent or current position first
- *Functional Resume* – places emphasis on the individual's skills and what the individual has to offer (often used when changing careers)
- *Combined* – uses both reverse chronological and functional formats

Presentation of Resume

- Use a font that will allow for easy reading of your resume and do not use less than a 10pt font size.

The Body of the Resume will include:

- Name, Address, Phone number(s), email address
- Objective, Professional Summary or Summary of Qualifications
- Education
- Skills – (Hard and Soft)
 - Report Types and Specialties
 - Computer Skills
 - Systems and Platforms
 - Lines Produced or Minutes Typed per hour
 - Dictation Systems
 - Voice Recognition Technology
 - Soft Skills - Management, communication, human relations, organization skills
- Employment History (most recent first and remember to list the types of reports transcribed and specialties)
- Associations

Create your professional resume and the first impression you want to convey. Instantly give the recruiter a positive feel about you!

Cover Letter

Add a finishing touch to your resume with a cover letter.

Get Personal

- Always write your cover letter to the appropriate person



- ☞ *State what you have to offer*
 - Mention the skills relevant to the position and discuss why they make you the best candidate
- ☞ *The next step*
 - At the end of your letter, make it clear you are actively pursuing a position with this company
 - Request an interview
 - Inform the recruiter you will be in touch to discuss your credentials

The Interview

Now that your resume has made the impression you intended, your interview is scheduled. If you are local to the organization, you will no doubt have a face-to-face interview; however, since my recruiting is nationwide, most of my interviews are conducted via the telephone. Carrying the theme of “first impressions” to the interview is of utmost importance, whether the interview is face-to-face or over the telephone – because it only takes 7 seconds for someone to form an opinion of you. You really don’t have a second chance to make that first impression.

With your interview scheduled, you will want to research the organization. The company’s web page offers information about the company’s history and may be useful during the interview process. It definitely makes sense to research a company to which you plan on making a commitment.

Certain factors should be present during the interview. Be punctual, dress professionally (people do judge a book by its cover), project a voice of confidence (this is critical with a telephone interview), understand what you have to offer, and express it professionally. If you are present in mind, body, and spirit during the interview, it will allow for an easy give-and-take of information. This give-and-take allows you and the recruiter the opportunity to decide whether a professional relationship has developed ultimately ending with a job offer.

Good luck with your job search. We are in this together!



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...For only \$15! These are cards used for discounts on a variety of services and products. Support PAMT as well as the House of Delegates and the Leadership Institute by purchasing cards today... for yourself, your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. They make great gifts!

Contact Carol Croft, CMT, FAAMT at carolpa48@aol.com. Send her the address where you would like your card sent, along with \$15, to 6407 Taunton Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111.



Industry News: Exciting Things are Going On in ASTM



Brenda J. Hurley, CMT, FAAMT
Chair of ASTM E31.15 Health Information Capture and Documentation

After our recent Atlanta meeting of ASTM E31 subcommittees, I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on some of the exciting things that are going on within E31.

First of all, we finalized the revised E 2117 "Standard Guide for Identification and Establishment of a Quality Assurance Program for Medical Transcription." This was an existing standard that had required a review because it was over five years old. As so many things change in five years, it is not unreasonable for subcommittees to maintain their current standards with a mandatory review to assure that their standards retain their relevancy. The revisions made in E 2117 are excellent and, for any department considering a quality assurance program in medical transcription, this standard will be a useful tool.

Dan Smith, the ASTM staff manager for E31.15, discussed the restructuring of E31 that had taken place during 2006 and how those changes impacted this subcommittee with a new name, scope, and number designation. Thus, the former E31.22 has been now changed to E31.15 with our new name and expanded scope that states: To develop standards for the systems, processes, and management of data capture and data entry technologies used in quality healthcare documentation.

David Kibbe, from the E31 executive committee, joined us and provided us with a glimpse of some of the changes coming in the future of healthcare documentation. Of special interest was the development of a document format product from Abode called ".pdf-h" utilizing the common .pdf format with special adaptations for healthcare documentation requirements (i.e. XML, standardized report templates, etc). This is exciting as one of the most appealing features of the .pdf format is its "static" presentation of information. This has the potential of solving a common problem for MT transcription services as a report when viewed on the screen by the MT or the MT service staff may look perfect but after it has been transmitted to a client and uploaded in their information system, the signature line appears alone on a separate page. The information within a .pdf document is the same, it remains stable, and it will not undergo this mystery transition witnessed with other document formats such as Word or .rtf. Another appealing benefit of such a format would be the fact that it would not require a massive expense for MTs or MT services to export to a .pdf format. There are lots of applications, even free ones, that can easily do this from any currently used document format such as Word.

We were pleased to have had a larger than expected attendance for our meeting in Atlanta, so we split into two workgroups to take on two of the tasks we had planned on our agenda.

One group began their initial review of the existing E 2184 Specification for Healthcare Document Formats. This standard will be five years old next year, so we wanted to get started on updating this document. One of the items we recognized immediately was the use of the word "formats," as there are several common meanings for that term. In one of the paragraphs above, I referred often to formatS; but, in that use, the format is related to the electronic composition such as Word or WordPerfect. This standard has nothing to do with that, but instead the arrangement of the headings and subheadings within a report. We recognized many deficiencies and limitations within the current document, so we will have our hands full with this project. But, knowing that it is of paramount importance to our industry, it will be worth the effort!



The other workgroup continued their diligent work on the new Standard Guide for a Disaster Recovery Plan in Medical Transcription. This is another enormous project and one that will provide a useful and much needed tool, when completed, for MT departments and services. One could only imagine how many of them have each re-invented the wheel to develop their own plan from scratch without the benefit of a standard to assist them—or worse yet, have no plan at all.

Our next meeting will be hosted by the Medical Transcription Industry Association in Jacksonville, Florida, and is scheduled for Friday, April 20, 2007, from noon to 3:30 p.m. This is a change from the previously advertised date of Saturday, April 21. Due to scheduling adjustments, it was necessary to move this meeting to Friday, April 20. Sorry for any potential confusion this may cause.

When it comes to what we do within ASTM, I have always said that we never lack ideas, only the people to help do the work necessary to bring those ideas to fruition. This meeting really proved this to be true, as we were able to double our production by having enough attendees to work concurrently in two separate workgroups.

If you are interested in joining us or if you would like more information about ASTM E31.15, contact me at bhurley@medwaremt.com or check out ASTM at www.astm.org.

Isn't it time for you to join the excitement!

Chapter Reports

Updates from the Local Chapters of PAMT



Greater Pittsburgh Chapter (GPC) Looking Forward to 2007

We at the GPC of AAMT are looking forward to 2007! We have a new slate of officers (President Linda Backner, VP Flossie Jack, Treasurer Marion Couch and Secretary Michele Carter-Payne) along with committee persons to start on some great projects. For those who are not aware, our chapter was founded by a small group led by Marge Ference in 1981. We were formed to meet the challenges to MTs brought upon by some of the “world’s brightest minds.” Membership in our local chapter affords each of us the opportunity to pursue personal and professional growth and development. To that end, we are looking forward to **March 24 at St. Clair Hospital**, when we will collaborate with PAMT for a professional workshop. We are anticipating an awesome program with a variety of speakers and of course, working closely with PAMT for experiences to be cherished forever.

Our second meeting will be held at **Jefferson Hospital on June 24**. This is our annual picnic meeting. We haven’t decided on the continuing education yet for the program, but you can be sure it will be something special! And of course, our famous or infamous (call it what you wish) picnic buffet where we each get to show off our favorite dishes. Cost of this meeting: A covered dish! You just can’t beat that price for a great time.

Finally for our third meeting we will plan a **symposium for September 2007** with more details to follow as they become available.

Also, before 2006 is over, we would like to wish a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year from all of us in Western PA to you and yours!

Flossie Jack, CMT



Managing Work/Life Balance in My Home Office

By Steve Gaus, President and CEO, MT Audit Services



Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed that your job never leaves your house? Does it seem like there's always more work than hours in the day? Do family or home interruptions sometimes take you off task and sap your productivity? How do you balance the non-paying important job of mother, homemaker, caretaker, and spouse with the demands of the paying job and the requirements for quality and turnaround time? Do you sometimes feel alone and lonely for a friendly chat? Do you sometimes beat yourself up for not getting your exercise regiment started or some other home project completed?

I do, and I have felt all of these emotions. I am a recovering workaholic, and it's been one day since I sent emails past 6 PM or ate at my desk or checked email before bed or breakfast...guilty as charged. It's a struggle that we all have to maintain a healthy balance in our lives as we work out of our homes and try and set boundaries to allow us to attain success, happiness and contentment (translation: marital harmony).

First, let's be honest... working from home is a blessing many days, but sometimes it is a curse. Stop and inventory the benefits of flexibility, savings in gas, parking, tolls, wardrobe, dry cleaning, day care, being the classroom mom, getting the kids on and off the bus, or not dealing with calling off when kids or parents are ill or in need of a doctor's appointment. Yes, it is nearly a dream environment; but also be cognizant of what you miss by not working in an office environment.

We are all social beings and sometimes working at home alone can lead to isolation and depression. So my first advice is to keep and maintain social and professional friendships and relationships. I generally try to ensure once a week I have a meeting outside of the home office for coffee or lunch. In nice weather I will often try to schedule a lunch out on the patio or a picnic with my wife at a nearby park away from the ding of email and cell phones. Be mindful of the social interruptions and make sure that they don't get you off task personally or professionally. TV isn't a friend...you can't have a relationship or a chat with your TV, and besides all the models on commercials are anorexic or living on diet pills and one breakdown away from rehab. I could have looked that good on a 1200-calorie diet and a 3-hour daily workout with a personal trainer when I was 22 years old. I'm 47. I need and enjoy more than 1200 calories, and I don't have 3 hours per day to slave in a gym. Find a friend or family member who might exercise or walk with you.

As for breaks, I will sometimes step away from my office to refresh myself with a cup of tea and 15 minutes to read the paper. Sometimes mundane tasks of laundry or the dishes help me appreciate the PC work. It's also a good break for the mind and using your hands to complete a task often times gives you a sense of accomplishment. Sometimes when you complete a really difficult task, you should consider rewarding yourself; but be conscious not to indulge in snacking of the wrong kind of foods. I encourage you to have healthy snacks available like carrots, apples, oranges or unsalted almonds. I have noticed sliced apples or oranges take longer to prepare and eat and thereby seem more satisfying. Limit your caffeine intake and always have a glass of room temperature drinking water available. Wintertime hydration is often underestimated, and it helps satisfies the urge to snack. That way when you do enjoy a break you can really savor the coffee or tea.

As winter sets in and the days are shorter, we all struggle with how to maintain our exercise regiment. It's amazing what a brief 25-minute walk will do for your physical and mental health. If it's too cold or inclement, then consider doing 20 minutes of stair climbing or work on an aerobic step. Stretching and light use of dumbbells are other good ways to maintain your fitness. Make sure your doctor approves any new exercise regiment.

Lastly, we are all blessed with an equal 168 hours per week. We sleep about 56 hours and work 40 hours, leaving us 72 hours per week to groom, clean, cook, eat, shop, watch TV, pay bills, do laundry and whatever else our families need. Try to devote an hour each day to yourself for quiet



reflection, meditation, reading, or relaxation and reset your family's expectations that are required by you for your health, happiness and well-being.

If you have home projects, make a reasonable list and then triage it: A's – Must be done within a time line; B's – Will get attention when A's are completed; and C's – Potentially will get attention if time allows and A's & B's are completed. The French nurses of World War I utilized the method of triage to greatly improve field hospital rates for survival and most ERs continue the practice today.

Have a "slow-day project" planned for those days when the census is low and the lines just aren't there. Planning for it and adjusting makes you endure the event and accomplish an important task, thus changing your perspective.

Lastly, put your hour per day for reflection, rejuvenation or running out to the local Curves as an A item. You'll notice you will start to feel better about yourself, and the changes will be noticed by your friends, family, and co-workers.

Don't wait until January 1st to make it a part of your daily regiment. Start today!!! Give it 30 days; psychologists have found it takes about 30 days to adopt a new behavior. If you have a weight loss goal, be reasonable and fair with your self-expectations. Know your metabolism changes in the winter and that you'll need to be selective with what holiday treats you can enjoy.

Balance is key! Good luck.

Letter From the Editor

by Grace M. LaConte, CMT, PAMT Newsletter Editor



Happy Holidays to you and your family.

During this busy time of year, I have found it necessary to slow down... and smell the coffee. Well, maybe not coffee, exactly—that strong smell, among others, made me queasy just a few weeks ago, because I'm expecting a baby! But as many of you know, being pregnant really forces you to rest more, to listen to your body (and the little one inside) more, and to consider how your life will change in just a few short months.

I really enjoyed Steve Gaus's presentation at the recent Professional Development conference put on by PAMT at Lancaster General Hospital (as well as his preceding article). His tips on making the most of your day and reminding us that everyone has exactly the same amount of time in a week, regardless of status or job description, made an especially strong impression on me. I did not expect that creating a baby would be so exhausting! My work schedule and expectations of myself have changed. I have found it necessary to take a new look at my priorities. But in doing that, I have realized what's most important: A balance between my personal life and my professional responsibilities.

I hope that, during the holidays and into the new year, you too will take a moment to rethink what is most important to you. Maybe your priorities are right on target—or maybe they need fine-tuned. But I'm sure that, if you take the time to recognize what it is that you value most this holiday season, you will not regret it.

Sincerely,

Grace M. LaConte, CMT, Editor
laconteproof@hotmail.com



My First Impression of the PAMT Workshop

by Tabi Dougherty, CMT

Wow! If you missed the opportunity to attend the PAMT Workshop held October 21, 2006, at Lancaster General Hospital, you missed a lot. What an excellent opportunity to learn about balancing work and life, about our appearance, what to look for in a job search, and last but certainly not least, on communicating effectively – be it in writing for the newsletter or giving a presentation.

I cannot say enough about this. I came away from the workshop with a new knowledge and understanding of how to better do my job.

Steve Gaus, President of Opti-Script, gave a presentation on how to better balance our work and personal lives. Awesome. One of the neat things that he shared with us was this: We have 168 hours in our week. Sleep takes up 53 hours; work, 40-60 hours; dress, preparation, and eating, 21 hours. The question was: How much does that leave for you, family, and friends—not to mention taking care of the house? One of the ways of finding out how much time we truly have in each day, he suggested, is to map out or chart how much time we spend on individual items. I definitely plan on taking this approach as I would be highly interested in knowing where my time is spent – as I never seem to have enough of it!

Next was a presentation on how our appearance affects others, given by Marilyn Walker, MS. She gave us examples of what colors to wear in business meetings and what not to wear. To go along with this presentation, we had a fashion show during lunch – in which I was thrilled to participate! What a grand time that was! Getting to dress up in nice clothes and model it for other MTs who were appreciative made my day.

After lunch, Vince Consoli of Webmedx gave a presentation on preparing for the job search. While I was not preparing for a job search, I still came away with knowledge on what a human resource person looks for in an employee.

And last but certainly not least, Brenda Hurley, CMT, FAAMT, gave a presentation on effective communication – not just in day-to-day activities, but in writing for the newsletter and giving presentations. Some of the ideas she shared with us was to keep a journal, identify topics of interest, do not get stuck on titles, and research using reliable resources.

I would highly recommend that if you did not have the opportunity to attend this exciting workshop, that you not miss the next one! It is sure to be just as good and a wonderful way to obtain those credits. I know I, for one, am glad that I did attend.

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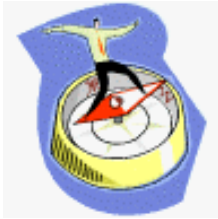
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PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION
Presents a Professional Development Workshop
Saturday, March 24, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
St. Clair's Hospital
1000 Bower Hill Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



“Thriving In a Fast-Changing Environment”

Four (4) CE credits

Specific topic information will be forthcoming

Pre-registration fee if postmarked by March 12, 2007:

Practitioner Member: \$35 Student Member: \$25 Potential Member: \$40

Registration if postmarked after March 12 and on-site:

Practitioner Member: \$45 Student Member: \$35 Potential Member: \$50

NOTE: Lunch included. AHIMA, PHIMA, and CPHIMA members are invited at the AAMT membership rates. No refunds.

For further information please contact Carol Croft, CMT, FAAMT at (717) 545-1319 or carolpa48@aol.com

Please make checks payable to PAMT and mail to: Norma Lopresti, CMT, FAAMT, PAMT Treasurer, P.O. Box 24, Stockertown, PA 18083

Detach here and send along with registration fee—Registration limited – register early!

Name: _____ AAMT/AHIMA/PHIMA/WPHIMA# _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please let us know of any special needs: _____



AAMT House of Delegates: Changes are Approved!

By Brenda J. Hurley, CMT, FAAMT, Florida Delegate

Since the history-making House of Delegates (HOD) meeting in Boston in August, the spirit of reform has been a major focus of discussion during the last two webinar HOD meetings, a very active HOD email listserv, and multiple webinar town hall sessions. On November 30, the HOD Implementation Plan (for reform) and several resolutions were approved. Here is a summary of those actions:

- The AAMT bylaws were amended to allow the HOD to make amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and to allow for an elected Speaker of the House.
- The Leadership Institute report was accepted.
- The concept of a web-based "regional" association has been approved to allow for HOD representation for AAMT members who reside in states without recognized S/R associations.
- Local chapters will no longer be required to have 4 officers but will have the option to retain AAMT recognition with only 2 officers.
- Members can join an S/R association in a geographic location other than the state in which they reside. There will be some restrictions to this "membership" but the intention is to allow those who move to another state the opportunity to maintain a "connection" with their original home state.
- Students and postgraduate members of AAMT can now vote in their S/R and national association elections, and those who have been a member of AAMT for one year or more will be eligible to hold office within their S/R association.
- The new association name has been slightly tweaked upon recommendation of AAMT's marketing consultants – it is now the **Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity**. Watch for more information from AAMT as to how and when component associations should start using this new name.
- The report on the Institute for Health Data Integrity was accepted.
- The 2007 HOD calendar has been published and will be on the AAMT website soon.
- The HOD Implementation Plan submitted by the HOD Reform Team was approved. This includes:
 - An updated Delegate policy (HOD-001) with new language for performance accountability and guidance for the role and duties of the delegate, including a checklist for success.
 - An updated Code of Commitment for Delegates.
 - Policies and procedures for the election of the Speaker of the House and the Speaker-Elect in 2008. The Speaker of the House will also chair the HOD Lead Team.
 - Policy for Delegate Removal. The checklist scoring and the removal policy will be closely monitored and assessed in 2007, as they do not go into effect until 2008.
 - A model S/R policy for Delegate Reimbursement.
 - HOD Operational Fund policy. Those renewing their AAMT membership will now be asked for a contribution to the HOD Operational Fund. This will go to the expenses related to the HOD.
 - A model S/R policy for the designation of Alternate Delegates.
 - Proposal for expanding HOD representation by using a web-based association. This was submitted as a separate resolution that was passed by the HOD (as reported above).
 - A new HOD Mission Statement: The AAMT House of Delegates is committed to implementing the strategic initiatives of our association through representation of membership with effective communication to membership and from membership, promotion of advocacy, legislative, and credentialing issues, and the development of future leadership within all levels of our association.



As you can see the last few months have been quite busy in creating and building a dynamic foundation for our newly remodeled and exciting HOD. Delegates will have more direction and a clearer expectation of their responsibilities. Component associations will find that this new HOD will be a valuable leadership resource for their challenges. And for all of those who believed in the HOD concept, and for those who didn't, watch for exciting things to come in 2007, as we roll up our sleeves and work as a team to collectively advance our association – it will be awesome!

Great Opportunities Available Within PAMT

Is there any better time than now to get involved in a dynamic organization where teamwork is first and foremost and so many issues could be addressed if we only had more and more people to help? Committees have been formed and we need YOU to come on board to help this fabulous 2007-2008 PAMT Board of Directors and also the membership of PAMT:



- Membership Committee – chair and committee members – trying to make sure MTs who need information about PAMT and local chapters receive this
- Education Committee – committee members – so many educational programs need guest speakers or people to volunteer for their advisory committee, need to even hear about AAMT. Judy Lichtenberger, CMT, FAAMT is our chair and is a great person to work with on this.
- Cert Connector – committee members – Sharon Allred, CMT, FAAMT is chair of this group and needs help with getting information out to membership about certification, both for the CMT and the new RMT.
- Legislative Committee – chair and committee members – no doubt, Pennsylvania has made some great inroads in making our legislators aware of whom we are and what we do with the tax issue, but we could do so much more if we had people to provide ideas and help in many different ways.
- Web Site Committee – help us develop an eye-appearing site as well as an area where pertinent information is available for our members.
- Fundraising – chair and committee members – all organizations need funds to provide educational opportunities or other opportunities that arise. We need YOU to help – several people in different geographic areas of Pennsylvania
- Newsletter Committee – we have a fabulous newsletter, due to a dedicated and professional newsletter editor, Grace LaConte, CMT, and she has agreed to continue. However, we always need help in this regard – to write articles, help her in any way possible.
- 2007 On-Site Annual Meeting Coordinator – for the past 2 years we have had Sandy Kovacs, CMT, FAAMT, doing a fabulous job at this, but we need to have someone else come on board as a “trainee” or to jump right in.

Any other ideas on how you can get involved? PAMT is run by volunteers and we are only limited by the number of people who get involved. You have so much to share, please make this the time to get involved.

AAMT's New Office!

AAMT is moving its offices to a new location as of January 1, 2007. The new address is:

4230 Kiernan Avenue, Ste. # 130
Modesto, CA 95356

Phone numbers will remain the same:
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Keys to Increasing Production

by Tabi Dougherty, CMT

Have you ever wondered how to increase your productivity? Have you sat there day after day wondering just what you could do? Well, I have been asked this in the past by a few MTs, and I thought I would share some of what I have discovered with all of you.

First, in the virtual world in which most of us conduct our business, we rely on email to communicate with people. This can be a huge time-waster and can bite significantly into our production. What works for me is to check my email in the morning prior to starting my workday. I have to get up and download my jobs a half-hour prior to starting, since I have dial-up internet access (yes, indeed, there are still parts of this country that do not have DSL!). So I use this opportunity to also download my email and go through it. Then on my breaks, if I do not have something else I need to take care of, I will check my email again. Of course, if the company that you are working for emails you, then you would want to go ahead and check that first. I have my email set up to give me a little blurb of what an email is about. That way, I know without having to go to the email program if it is a message from my employer.

Second, I know a lot of MTSOs (medical transcription service owners) use Instant Messenger to communicate with one another. This, too, can be another insidious way of losing time and productivity if you are not careful – especially because non-co-workers (read – family, friends, etc.) love to IM you during your work hours. I have had this happen consistently. My status will say that I am working; however, I still have people contacting me. If it is a non-work-related issue or is a non-emergency, I generally tell the person that I am working and have a personal goal of so many lines. They will understand. I have a close friend with whom I stay in contact via IM. We made a plan that, to increase both of our productions, we would only IM in certain scenarios. This has worked out great for both of us!

Another area in which you can lose time/productivity is if you work at home. There are a multitude of items that can demand one's attention and take it away from work:

- The phone. Most of us have caller ID. I would recommend using that to your advantage and only take calls from an employer. Obviously, if you have school-age children, you would want to answer a call from the school, as well.
- Laundry. I know, it sits there and reminds us of its presence all the time. However, during work hours is not the best time to be doing this chore. Putting in a load while on break is one thing, but I know that I, personally, like to get up when the dryer is done and check the clothes because I do not want them to wrinkle. Sigh... it's a never-ending cycle!
- Dishwasher needs loaded. This is another area that I tend to get myself lost in. Once again, it is probably best to either do this chore prior to starting work or at the end of your day.
- People dropping in. I have not had this happen too often but, when it does, I gently explain that I am working and that they need to leave. I know this sounds rude, but you have to make money too – and others sure would not appreciate you stopping at their place of employment and keeping them from their job.
- Children. This is one of my biggest time-wasting areas (other than email/IM). They are old enough to realize that I am working but not quite at the stage to listen and keep quiet. I have started telling them that my job is important and if they want certain items, they have to let me work and make the money necessary to keep a roof over our heads.

Lastly, make great use of your word expander! I cannot stress this one enough. I love my word expander program and do not know where I would be without it.



In the past month (this is just doing the IM plan listed above and making more use of my word expander), I have increased my production by 300 lines a day. My personal goal is to increase it even more.

If anyone has any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at tabimt@gmail.com.

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ATTENTION ALL NEW CMTs!

If you passed the Certified Medical Transcription (CMT) exam in 2006, don't forget to submit the cost of your exam to PAMT for reimbursement! The PAMT board of directors will reimburse one CMT the cost of the exam for 2006, as funds allow. The deadline is December 31, so send it in!

We are very aware of the time new CMTs spend in preparation for the exam, not to mention the cost of this exam, and we are so proud of them for recognizing the value of this credential. To become a Certified Medical Transcriptionist by exam is truly important to our professional recognition.

RULES:

The exam must be taken and passed in the current calendar year. As such, all new CMTs for this year (2006) can submit an entry form to the PAMT Treasurer for consideration if you take and pass the exam between January 1 and December 31, 2006. If you are reimbursed by your employer, you would not be eligible because we want to make sure someone who does not have this reimbursement is rewarded. Proof of CMT credential must be included with the entry form. The winning entry will be selected through a drawing by the PAMT board of directors at the first board meeting of the next calendar year. The winner will be notified and this award will be presented at the PAMT Annual Meeting & Educational Conference of that year. The winner must be a resident of Pennsylvania. The winner does not need to be a member of AAMT. This award will be given on a yearly basis as funding allows.

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Name _____ CMT # _____

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Please submit for to: PAMT Treasurer
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2007

March 10, 2007 – SVC chapter meeting in Baltimore, MD.

March 24, 2007, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Professional Development Workshop: “Thriving in a Fast-Changing Environment” at St. Clair’s Hospital in Pittsburgh, PA.

May 2007

May 19, 2007 – Northern Allegheny Mountain Chapter meeting in Buffalo, NY (contact Marlene Lester for more info).

June 2007

June 9, 2007 – SVC chapter meeting; location TBA.

August 2007

AAMT National Conference – Reno Hilton International, Reno, NV

September 2007

September 8, 2007 – SVC chapter meeting; location TBA.

September 29, 2007 – Northern Allegheny Mountain Chapter meeting in Warren, PA (contact Marlene Lester for more info).

October 2007

October 26-27 – 19th Annual PAMT Annual Meeting and Educational Conference at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey in Grantville, PA.

December 2007

December 8, 2007 – SVC chapter meeting; location TBA.

August 4-10, 2008

AAMT National Conference – Hilton Hotel in Walt Disney World Resort, Orlando, FL

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Please note this important information:

Deadline	Publication Date (week of)
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Sunday, 6/10/07	Monday, 6/18/07
Sunday, 9/15/07	Monday, 9/24/07
Sunday, 12/9/07	Monday, 12/17/07

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