

Dictation Guidelines

(Revised 1.2023)

This guide serves as a resource to help you learn how to properly utilize a dictation system. The following steps can be followed for either St. John's Hospital or Springfield Memorial Hospital.

Although the use of a hospital dictation system seems rudimentary, there are several things you can do to ensure your dictation is typed accurately.

Inputting the Medical Record Number

Accurately inputting the medical record number or Epic CSN (contact serial number) is very important. Simply inputting all 9s or some other number because you don't know what the medical record number or CSN causes confusion for transcription staff. Correctly inputting the medical record number or CSN ensures that the dictation is matched up with the correct patient. It also allows transcription staff to look up a dictation very quickly if you need it typed STAT. Without the correct medical record number, the staff has no way to find your dictation other than to physically listen to everything you've dictated.

St. John's Hospital

The Epic CSN should be entered instead of the medical record number.

Springfield Memorial Hospital The medical record number is the number labeled "MRN" and can be up to 7 digits. This number usually has a leading 0 in Powerchart, but the leading zero is not needed when entering in the MRN for dictations; (you can leave off the leading zero).

Things you can do to help the transcriptionist ensure an excellent outcome:

1. When you are ready to dictate, be prepared. For example, retrieve the medical record or any other paperwork you need. This will help save you time during your dictation having all the information you need in front of you.
2. At SMH you will be asked to input your 4 digit ID number. SJS dictation will be the provider unique Epic ID number. Please make certain you enter this correctly so that you are identified as the physician dictating. This number is unique to you. Please do not share this number.
3. Make certain you pick the correct work type. For example, if you are dictating a H&P, choose the work type for H&P. If you dictate a consultation under the H&P work type, it makes it quite difficult for the transcriptionist to find your dictation should you need him/her to type it more quickly.
4. Please distinctly state your name for each dictation – this helps the transcriptionist make sure he/she has the correct physician just in case the 4 digit ID number or EPIC ID was accidentally entered incorrectly.
5. Please distinctly state "the co-signing physician is _____." This cosigning physician is also known as YOUR Attending physician. State both his/her first name in addition to last name, and spell it if necessary. We have several attending physicians that have similar or the same last names. This is also very important to dictate, and if you do not dictate your cosigner your dictation will likely be delayed posting in to the chart until you are paged to ask who should cosign your dictation. To avoid constant paging to ask this, please dictate who your cosigning attending is.

- Please note: Memorial’s transcription company does not assume that when you as a resident state “my attending physician is Dr. _____”, that this means that Dr. is also your cosigner. You must state “my cosigning physician is Dr. _____”.

Attending physicians have two meanings:

1. *Your attending physician is the one overseeing you as a resident and cosigning some of your documentation/orders.*
2. *The patient also has an attending- the one overseeing their visit to the hospital/the physician who admitted them.*

6. Please distinctly state and spell the patient’s name and state the medical record number for each dictation – this helps the transcriptionist make sure he/she has the correct patient just in case the medical record number was entered incorrectly.
7. Please state type of report you are dictating. Sometimes the incorrect code number is punched into the keypad of the phone unintentionally. Stating what you are intending the report to be is helpful
8. Please provide the appropriate dates of treatment (i.e. admission date if dictating H&P, surgery date for operative report, discharge date for discharge summary, consultation date for consults, etc) – for patients with multiple visits, this helps to ensure the transcriptionist attaches the dictation to the correct visit.
9. Make certain you include all the elements that are required by The Joint Commission for History and Physicals, Operative Reports and Discharge Summaries.
 - The St. John’s Hospital Dictation Card clearly outlines what the requirements are for each report type.
 - Memorial has clearly defined requirements in the Medical Staff By-Laws and Rules/Regulations as far as JC (Joint Commission) and CMS (Centers for Medicare/Medicaid) documentation requirements. Also note, coding may request clarifications or additional documentation in order to properly code a chart, and may request documentation be completed sooner rather than later.
10. Speak as clearly as possible to ensure the transcriptionist is able to understand what you are saying. For example, the number 50 often sounds like 15. (example: if stating “fifty” also say “five-zero” or “fifteen” also state “one-five”) Various accents come through less clearly than others. Use the following tips to ensure clear dictation:
 - DO NOT USE CELL PHONES – cells phones tend to fade in and out and suddenly drop off.
 - Dictate in a quiet place so as to minimize outside noise that can be heard by the transcriptionist. For example, when a TV or radio is on or there are background conversations taking place; all of this noise is recorded and can be heard by the transcriptionist. It makes it difficult for the transcriptionist to pick out your voice versus the other noise.
 - Speak directly into the telephone. This sounds simple, but really, you’d be surprised how many people don’t actually speak into the telephone receiver.
 - Do not whisper or speak with a very soft voice. Again, just remember you are being recorded and you want the transcriptionist to be able to hear you dictate.

- Do not eat or chew gum while dictating as this causes the dictation to sound mumbled.
 - Do not dictate while driving, especially with the window(s) down.
 - Do not dictate in public places, such as sporting events or other public venues. Remember that the information you are dictating is confidential and not for others to overhear.
11. If you are interrupted during dictation, both St. John’s Hospital and Springfield Memorial Hospital have hot buttons on the phone for you to use to pause your dictation so that you can take care of the interruption and then resume your dictation once you have addressed the issue.
- St. John’s Hospital – press the “4” on the keypad to pause while dictating and the “2” to resume dictating. Can use “2” for both.
 - Springfield Memorial Hospital – press the “2” on the keypad to pause while dictating and the “2” to resume dictating.
12. Do not dictate multiple patients’ dictations in one recording. You must press the below numbers between each patient’s dictation in order to properly separate the recordings. If you do not, the recordings may not be separated and you might have to re-dictate them.
- St. John’s Hospital – press the “8” after each dictation when dictating multiple reports and follow the voice prompts. Press “5” to disconnect.
 - Springfield Memorial Hospital – press the “8” after each dictation when dictating multiple reports and follow the voice prompts. Press “9” when completely finished with all reports and ready to hang up.
13. If you are dictating and realize you’ve made an error, simply say “Correction Please”, indicate what you want deleted and then dictate the correct information. It is important to say “Correction Please” so that the transcriptionist realizes you need a correction made, and if the correction is an afterthought of something already dictated early on in the same dictation, instruct the transcriptionist on where you would like the correction made.
14. If you dictate at the wrong hospital, please be aware you may be required to re-dictate at the correct hospital. Call one of the hospitals and let us know you dictated incorrectly. We might be able to retrieve the typed report and place it on the chart by scanning it.

STAT Reports

- Springfield Memorial Hospital – Use the correct worktype code number to dictate, and then JUST PRIOR to pressing “8” or “9” to end the dictation, press “6”. The system will prompt that the dictation has been made stat. Then press “8” or “9” to end the dictation.
- St. John’s Hospital – If you need a job done STAT, please press * for Stat report.

These are helpful hints to make your dictation experience successful thus creating less work for both you and the transcriptionist. If you learn to follow these tips, you will be well on your way to being a great dictator. And remember, the transcriptionist is there to help you out. If you have questions, never hesitate to ask a transcriptionist how to help you use the dictation system.