



Let us love winter, for it is  
the spring of genius!



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## Employer Spotlight - AccuScribe



AccuScribe Transcription Services, LLC is operated by a close-knit group of individuals that have worked together for nearly 14 years. Trudi Griffith, CEO, CMT, AHDI-F, has been actively involved in the industry for over 35 years. As a previous medical transcriptionist herself, an educator and business owner, she has cultivated a very intelligent and hard-working group of individuals who have created an internal operations system that has been the main focus of the company from its inception. In the past few years, AccuScribe has branched out into the development arena and spawned an offshoot company, Fortriss, LLC.

Fortriss has created and developed a lightweight EHR system with a transcription platform of its own. Interns will work on the ClearScript transcription platform transcribing scrubbed dictation. The transcription dictation the interns receive is the real McCoy.

AccuScribe promotes from within to shorten the learning curve for new managers and shift leads or QA Specialists. Each and every intern's progress is monitored and work performance statistics are trended to visualize the next round of rising stars. AccuScribe has a lively and very active internship program with multiple colleges throughout the US and Canada. The goal of the internship program is to replenish a dwindling stock of MTs but AccuScribe wants to ensure that the replacements are the most well polished and professional MTs to enter the workforce.

**Very few US Schools can compare to the quality of the interns that CanScribe turns out!** AccuScribe states that whatever CanScribe is teaching, please continue teaching it. There is little in the way of feedback that AccuScribe staff can offer to CanScribe by way of improvement of their transcription training because AccuScribe hires more CanScribe interns than from any other school.

AccuScribe offers interns the opportunity of personal growth through varied specialties under the guidance of Stacy

Trevethan, the Director of Operations, and Priscilla Sylvest, Director of Training—both are prior MTs with many years in the business.

Stacy created a Credentialing Cup web site for which AccuScribe has twice competed with a very high percentage of Credentialing Cup participants obtaining their RMT or CMT credentials through AHDI. Over 25% of AccuScribe MTs are now credentialed and AccuScribe desires to increase that percentage by offering the training tools for free to all MTs and interns who seek to raise their level of professionalism.

Priscilla works directly with all interns throughout their experience with AccuScribe. She assists recruits through an extremely automated, self-directed intranet training site which is designed to guide the MT through the use of the transcription platform. Priscilla tracks the progress of each intern and provides scores to the college on their progress. Priscilla's close monitoring ensures that all interns' needs are met and she is always on the lookout for anyone needing extra assistance.

Following the initial training, **what does an MT need to bring to the table in order to be successful? What does AccuScribe look for in their aspiring MTs?** After questioning Priscilla and Stacy the response was unanimous—"we look for MTs who are highly-motivated, eager to learn, and dedication to exploring all aspects of the medical transcription field."

**What attitude and tools should a student bring to the job with them?**

Stacy recommends a willingness to learn, an open mind and the ability to accept constructive criticism. Each and every day is a learning experience in the field of medical transcription. We are constantly learning new terminology, new medication names, and transcribing information that sometimes leads us out of our comfort zone by transcribing reports in different specialties. This is how the MT or intern broadens their skills and abilities, by slowly and steadily taking on new challenges. By stepping outside of one's comfort zone and being willing to learn new things, a good MT builds from this foundation to become a true professional.

Priscilla recommends excellent research skills because the willingness to learn this valuable skill will vastly expand the potential of the MT/intern. The current edition of the BOS provides excellent all-around reference material while later adding either the print or CD copies of specialty word books as the need arises.

**What should an MT expect once they begin the job?**

Expect an excellent learning experience with the opportunity to grow within your profession from feedback on work submitted. Feedback is offered from a designated Quality Assurance Specialist or through an automated feedback process detailing the corrections made by the editing staff. Every intern experiences a positive, supportive atmosphere with guidance through the initial probationary period of the internship. Interns will hone their skills on real dictators in primary care, emergency room and cardiology reports providing exposure to several specialties offering the real-world transcription experience.

At AccuScribe, the goal is to help the intern understand that she is never alone and AccuScribe finds that the individual feedback from the staff's many years of experience provides the intern the best opportunity for success. AccuScribe supports the internship program as an immensely valuable addition to an intern's formal schooling, an addition that will strengthen the intern's knowledge of what to expect when achieving your first paying MT job. This experience is designed to further enhance the intern's understanding of the necessary qualities to be a successful MT and what is needed to take your newly chosen career on the path to success.

## Frontline



It's hard to believe we are almost through another year, with Christmas just around the bend. For those of you I haven't had the pleasure of speaking with, my name is Jess and I manage the front desk at CanScribe. Along with many daily tasks my top priority each and every day is answering all incoming phone calls and directing them to the appropriate CanScribe member.

CanScribe encourages students and graduates to call us at any time with questions or concerns you may have. Here are a few things that would really help us out when you're calling and ensure you are speaking with the appropriate CanScribe member:

- Provide your name at the beginning of the call. This will allow us to bring up your file while we have you on the phone.
- Provide a brief explanation to the reason of your call and we will be able to determine the CanScribe member best suited to help with your question or concern.
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If you are connected to the voicemail of the CanScribe member you are transferred to chances are they have stepped away from their desk for a moment or they are currently on another call. Please leave a brief message with your name and reason for calling and they will be sure to return your phone call within the business day. Your phone calls are very important to us and we will do our best to address your questions and concerns in a timely fashion.

I wish all of you the best during the Holiday Season.  
Jess Parker

## Job Search



Oh no, now what do I do? I've successfully completed my training and now I have to look for a job! Eeeks!! Don't worry; we've got some great tips that will help you.

1. If you haven't already done so, please forward your resume to Heather Scholes at CanScribe and she will be happy to send back an industry-focused resume.
2. Send your cover letter and resume to everyone you can think of who might hire MTs: hospitals, clinics, doctor's offices, service providers, x-ray labs, health authorities, rehab facilities and so on.
3. Create a list of your top 5 employers.
4. Start your online pre-employment testing with the last employer on your list. That way you are better prepared for the testing by the time you get to your top 3 choices.
5. Take your pre-employment tests when you have a good amount of uninterrupted quiet time. Relax and don't be nervous! Remember, you have all the tools and skills to excel in your field.
6. Have all of your resources around you during the testing process. Focus!
7. Follow up by e-mailing the recruiter directly if you can. Follow up regularly. Weekly followup is a great way to keep your name in the forefront of the recruiter's mind. Keep track of when you last followed up and with whom.
8. Network with CanScribe graduates to find out where they are working, if they have recruiter, contact names, how they like the Medical Transcription Service Provider, type of work/platform, how they are paid, etc. Talk to people you know: doctors, nurses, hospital employees, friends, relatives, neighbors, and ask them if they know of any work available or anyone you can talk to who can direct you to possible employment opportunities
9. Stay in touch with CanScribe's Student Support department. Jo-Ann Clarke and Heather Scholes are experienced MTs. Both know just how difficult the job search can be.
10. Be prepared to devote full time hours to your job search. Remember, looking for a job is a job in itself.
11. Have a professional e-mail address i.e., [firstnamelastname@whatever.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@whatever.com). You are making an impression with your e-mail address, often the first impression. You certainly don't want it to be your last impression!
12. Be prepared to answer questions like "Why do you want to work for \_\_\_\_?"
13. Send a thank you e-mail after each interview.
14. Use job search engines such as <http://www.mtdaily.com/ads.html> or <http://jobs.mtstars.com/> for example.

Many people who run medical transcription services find that a well-trained entry-level employee is often (not always) a better investment than someone with years of experience. This is because they can be trained to meet very high standards of quality, whereas the person with experience might have years of certain bad habits that are hard to correct. Keep in mind that there are people out there who are willing to give motivated, newly trained medical transcriptionists a chance at a great career. Keep a positive attitude and great things will happen!

## Things We Have Two Of



This may seem like a silly subject, but in the world of medical transcription it is something we definitely need to remember! As a medical transcription supervisor and editor for a number of years, let me assure you I have made many corrections to reports where someone did not correctly use plurals. In the case of our body parts, we need to remember what things we have two of. This will save you from the "nastygrams" from your QA editors and save embarrassment if the report reaches the dictator with errors.

Okay, to review, let's start at the head and work our way down. We have two of the following: eyes, ears, lips, nostrils, cheeks, eyelids, and eyebrows. We also have two shoulders, arms, elbows, forearms, wrists and hands. In our midsection we have two breasts, lungs, kidneys, hips and buttocks. For the lower extremities, we have two thighs, knees, calves, ankles and feet.

We have two upper extremities and two lower extremities. However, we only have one right upper extremity, not two!

Remember that we do not have two heads, throats, necks, chests, stomachs, or other various intestinal organs. Often times the dictator will say the singular in a report when it should be plural or vice versa. It is our job to correct this. I can't tell you how many times I have listened to a dictation that says, "The patient's right breasts were normal." Bear in mind, however, there are times when a patient may not have two of something that the rest of us do. This would definitely merit special mention in a report. In the case of a chest and breast examination, if the patient has had a mastectomy, the physician would note this in the dictation.

So, please remember to be aware of singular and plural words in reports, a little hint that will increase the accuracy of your documents.

## Flu Facts



The flu!!! These 2 little words strike fear into many of us, but especially in MTs that are independent contractors with no paid sick time. Yes, we work from home and can climb into bed when the mood strikes, but every minute away from the keyboard can impact the paycheck. Nothing is more frustrating than typing the multitude of ER flu reports except maybe being sick while doing it! So what can we do to minimize the impact? Arm ourselves with knowledge so that we can make informed decisions on what is best for ourselves and our families.

First off, it is important to be able to recognize the difference between the flu and the common cold.

	Pandemic H1N1 Flu Virus	Seasonal Flu	Common Cold
What is it?	<p>The H1N1 flu virus is different than regular seasonal flu.</p> <p>This is a new strain of influenza and because humans have little to no natural immunity to this virus it can cause serious and widespread illness.</p>	<p>Influenza, or the flu, is a common and highly contagious, infectious respiratory disease that affects the nose, throat and lungs.</p> <p>Influenza viruses can change rapidly. That's why there is a new flu shot made every year to protect against the circulating virus strains.</p> <p>Yearly exposure to existing strains of the flu provides some level of immunity to seasonal flu.</p>	<p>A cold is a mild infection of the nose and throat caused by a variety of viruses.</p> <p>Although a cold might linger, the symptoms remain mild.</p>
Symptoms	<p><b>Almost Always</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sudden onset of cough and fever</li> </ul> <p><b>Common</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Muscle aches</li> <li>Sore throat</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Runny nose</li> <li>Sneezing</li> <li>Cough</li> <li>Sore throat</li> </ul>

- Headache
- Decreased appetite
- Runny nose

**Sometimes**

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

The influenza virus spreads through droplets that have been coughed or sneezed by someone who has the flu. You can get the flu if droplets land on the surface of your eye. You can also get the flu by shaking hands with an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces, and then touching your own eyes, nose or mouth.

**What are ways to reduce the risk of catching or spreading the flu?**

**Washing Up** — Washing hands regularly with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds, or using alcohol hand rubs especially before and after eating, after using the bathroom, after coughing or sneezing, and after touching surfaces that may have been contaminated by other people.

**Covering Up** — Using a tissue or raising your arm up to your face to cough or sneeze into your sleeve is the best way to avoid spreading the virus. It keeps infected droplets out of the air and off surfaces that will be touched by others, and stops you from contaminating your hands with the virus.

**Cleaning Up** — If you've coughed or sneezed into a tissue, throw it away as soon as possible. You should also frequently clean and then disinfect household surfaces, such as door handles and light switches that may have been contaminated.

If you get flu-like symptoms and are otherwise healthy, you should stay home to recover. If your symptoms worsen or you experience difficulty breathing or serious shortness of breath, it is important to seek medical attention.

Antivirals are drugs used for the early treatment of influenza. If taken shortly after getting sick (within 48 hours), they can reduce influenza symptoms, shorten the length of illness and potentially reduce the serious complications of influenza. Antivirals do not prevent you from getting sick. Antivirals are recommended for the treatment of moderate to severe illness, and for people at risk of severe disease. Your doctor will decide if treatment is right for you.

Influenza vaccines (also called flu shots) help you to prevent getting sick by introducing your body to a weakened or dead version of the virus to teach your body to build immunity to it. This year, there will be vaccines for both types of flu — one for the regular seasonal influenza, and one for the H1N1 flu virus.

Be smart this winter. Take precautions, stay healthy, keep hydrated, and get lots of sleep. We can't all avoid getting ill, but we can do our best to minimize the damage.

## Tax Tips



Can you believe we are almost at the end of another year?! My name is Brenda Lawrence and I am the General Manager at CanScribe Career Centre. I've been with CanScribe for about a year and a half and have enjoyed talking and corresponding with many of you.

Last year I did a chat around income tax time, to address and answer some of your questions regarding what you can and cannot claim as an independent contractor, running your business from home, as well as questions regarding T2202A forms for claiming your tuition. You can review this chat session on the CanScribe forum under "Tax Chat with Brenda Lawrence".

I am not an accountant or tax expert, but can address certain questions for you as well as point you in the right direction to get the information you are looking for and need. Revenue Canada has many sites on-line for students

and independent contractors as well.

If you wish to send me your questions by email, I will review all of them and when I do the next tax chat in 2010, I'll be able to address all of you; as I'm sure many of you have similar questions.

I wish you all a glorious Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

We at CanScribe look forward to all of you becoming practicing Medical Transcriptionists in the New Year.

Brenda Lawrence  
[blawrence@canscribe.com](mailto:blawrence@canscribe.com)

## Tech Talk



Windows: Standby, Hibernate, Shutdown and Restart — Which to use?

A debate has brewed for years, over which is better for your computer: Leaving it on continuously, allowing the system to go into Standby or Hibernation, or shutting the computer down. Here is some information that may help with your decision as to how to deal with one of the most important tools you will have as an MT.

In a system running Windows, you actually have three choices: shut down, hibernate, and standby.

Shut Down - turns off the computer. (It is also the general term for: Log off, Shut down, Restart, Stand by and Hibernate) If you are going to sleep, shut down the computer and turn the power supply unit off, then turn the monitor off, and finally turn the power bar off. It is very important that you shut down your system properly. Simply turning the power off with the power switch can cause serious file system damage. While the system is on, files are in use even if you aren't doing anything. Remember that there are many processes running in the background all the time. These processes are managing the system and keep a lot of files open. When the system's power is switched off, these files are not closed properly and may become corrupted. Depending on what files become damaged, the system might be rendered completely unusable! In any case, you'll have to go through a long filesystem check procedure on the next reboot.

Restart - restarts the computer rather like turning it off and then on again.

Standby - (also called "suspend") drops the computer into a very low power mode. The display turns off (on a desktop, depending on the monitor type, you may have to turn off the power on the display to achieve maximum power savings), the disk drive stops spinning, and the processor shuts down almost completely. In standby, power is used mainly to keep the contents of random access memory refreshed. Standby is also better put to use in laptops, but you should use it for just being away from the computer for about 1 - 2 hours, such as watching TV or doing gardening. The only major problem with standby is that on most desktops it can cause lock ups since the computer is coming quickly to an operating state, so you can use it but just be aware that the computer might once in a while have problems coming out of standby.

Hibernation - is best put to use in laptops, since you are always moving around and need to get back to work quickly, also hibernation does take up hard drive space when used.

Unless your computer is in need of rebooting, and all of them need a restart from time to time to clean out the junk that accumulates in Windows, you will want to go with either standby or hibernate. To manage these functions, go to the Control Panel and choose "Power Options," then click on the "Advanced" tab.

If you really want to save electricity you should turn off your computer, and if the Power Supply Unit (PSU) on the back of the computer's case has a power switch, flip it off if you want to, there is no harm done. It is a really good idea since even with the computer off the power still goes through the motherboard. Also by turning the PSU off and not the whole power bar you will still have wireless access if you have a wireless router.

You should also change your power scheme, to turn off the hard drive and monitor after 8 minutes of being unused, but don't set the standby timer on since it will be problematic, and it is better to select standby when you need it.

Power consumption chart

Computer state	Consumption
Powered On	100%
Powered On, but Monitor Off	60%
Standby	35%
Hibernation	1%
Powered Off	0%

## Voice Recognition Software



Medical transcription is a lesser-known profession to the general public in spite of the fact that medical transcriptionists (MTs) are a part of everyone's health care.

The future and security of MT's jobs has begun to be questioned as voice recognition (VR) technology becomes increasingly refined. VR converts spoken words into text, potentially eliminating the need for MTs. Proponents for VR advertise how VR will save medical professionals thousands of dollars over employing MTs. However, the reality is VR is nowhere near refined enough to replace MTs.

VR technology would need to be able to "understand" different accents, separate background noise from what is being dictated, and convert any abbreviations used into their full form. In addition, context plays a large role in understanding spoken language. VR needs to "understand" context to differentiate between: urine vs. you're in, cauterize vs. caught her eyes, align vs. a line, dilate vs. die late, and so on before it can replace MTs.

Currently, VR for the purpose of medical transcription is being used in two ways, front-end VR and back-end or deferred VR. Front-end VR creates a report that rarely goes through an MT but is more time consuming for the medical professional. Medical professionals using front-end VR dictate into a recognition system and the words are displayed on a monitor as they are spoken; the dictator is responsible for catching mistakes, editing, and completing the document for sign off. The question for professionals using front-end VR is; *is editing reports a better use of their time than seeing additional patients?*

Back-end VR is when a recording of what is being dictated is played and a draft document is created. Both the draft document and voice recording are sent to an MT who listens to the recording, edits the draft, and finalizes the report for sign off. Back-end VR is the most common form of VR being used in medical transcription. Back-end VR has made medical transcription more efficient and helps MTs generate more reports in less time.

VR will not make MTs obsolete. The duties and responsibilities of MTs may change due to advancements in VR technology but the day when VR completely eliminates the need for MTs is not in the foreseeable future. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the outlook for job opportunities for MTs is good. The aging baby boomer population will increase the demand for MTs. Employment opportunities for MTs are projected to grow faster than the average. A 14 percent growth is expected between 2006- 2016; in 2006 98,000 MTs were employed, by 2016 112,000 MTs are expected to be employed. MTs jobs are secure and they should view VR as a tool to aid them in their job, not as threat.

**Author:** Erika Christenson

## Crafty Christmas



Every year I struggle while searching for the perfect gift to give family and friends during the holidays. I fight for a parking spot at the mall and clear out my bank account buying "stuff" that no one in my family needs. So I've decided that this year will be different. It's going to be about the holiday; family, friends, and food. I'm going to seriously get my craft on.

I'm sure many of you will already have your shopping wrapped up by the time this newsletter comes out, but if not, here are some easy, crafty gift ideas that you don't have to be Martha to pull off.

Enjoy cooking? Surely there are people on your list who enjoy eating, so how about a batch of homemade beef jerky, or a box of specially made truffles? You can create jars filled with all the ingredients needed for holiday cookies or a hot beverage mix. Include the cooking directions and a festive bow and...Voila! Instant gift.

With digital cameras and numerous on-line do-it-yourself websites, you can create a special one-of-a-kind gift for everyone on your list. You can make a personalized photo book, family calendar, and more. All are really simple ideas, requiring just a little forethought.

Whatever you craft, homemade gifts add meaning to the holiday season and keep extra cash in your wallet. So throw the apple cider on the stove, pull out the board games, and get down with some Christmas carols. Have a happy holiday!

## Graduate Corner



We are so proud of all the CanScribe graduates and would like to congratulate you for a job well done! Please keep in touch and share your experiences with us! Email:

[info@canscribe.com](mailto:info@canscribe.com)

### Graduate Corner September 2009 — November 2009

Taylor A.	Chilliwack, BC	Amber M.	Cornwall, PEI
Desta B.	Winnipeg, MB	Liz M.	Bobcaygeon, ON
Bobbi B.	Regina, SK	Rachelle M.	Eckville, AB
Suzanne B.	Debden, SK	Joan M.	Lethbridge, AB
Lisa B.	Kendal, ON	Pattie M.	Calgary, AB
Norine B.	Uxbridge, ON	Leah M.	Pickering, ON
Kristen B.	Edmonton, AB	Candace M.	Ethelbert, MB
Sandra B.	Saskatoon, SK	Ceyrah M.	Vernon, BC
Joanne B.	Burnaby, BC	Shaughn O.	Wyoming, ON
Crystal C.	Milton, ON	Julie P.	Orangeville, ON
Barbara C.	St. Catharines, ON	Visnja R.	Thorold, ON
Jennifer C.	Minden, ON	Romy R.	Orleans, ON
Jessica D.	Winnipeg, MB	Dodie R.	Upper Rawdon, NS
Margaret D.	Windsor, ON	Susan R.	Winnipeg, MB
Clara D.	Amherstburg, ON	Kerry R.	Cranbrook, BC
Chantel E.	Saskatoon, SK	Irene S.	Hamilton, ON
Vinee F.	Mississauga, ON	Pamela S.	Chilliwack, BC
Sherry F.	Parksville, BC	Sheila S.	New Westminster, BC

Coralie G.	Swan River, MB	Danette S.	Dalmeny, SK
Arlene G.	Claydon, SK	Erin S.	Nanaimo, BC
Cheryl H.	Penticton, BC	Kristin S.	Sarnia, ON
Cheryl H.	Edmonton, AB	Angelika S.	Courtenay, BC
Patricia J.	Edmonton, AB	Darcy S.	Fredericton, NB
Claire J.	Sarnia, ON	Barbara S.	Spruce Grove, AB
Suzanne K.	Halifax, NS	Melina S.	Westbank, BC
Cheryl L.	Calgary, AB	Maria S.	Whitby, ON
Mark L.	Coldstream, BC	Catherine T.	Kingston, ON
Priscilla L.	Tofino, BC	Patricia W.	Mission, BC
Leah L.	Millet, AB	Angel W.	Kelowna, BC
Sarah M.	Medicine Hat, AB	Kimberly W.	Guelph, ON
Lisa M.	North Vancouver, BC	Angie W.	Sherwood Park, AB

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