



## **CMT/RMT STUDY GROUPS**

### **Suggested Format and Curriculum Guidelines**

The success of CMT and RMT Study Groups relies heavily on the abilities and motivations of the study group facilitators, good organizational skills, time to allocate to facilitating the program, a willingness to encourage and motivate individuals, and knowledge of exam requirements and procedures. Having someone who has taken the current exam available for questions could be helpful. It is more important that facilitators assist candidates in preparing for the exam, nurture good study habits, and remain a resource for candidates throughout the process.

#### **Length of Study Group Sessions**

It is recommended that the study group meet from 4 to 8 weeks, or up to 3 months, depending on the needs of the group. Meetings should be either face-to-face or online for up to 3 hours once a week with assigned activities. All parties in the study group should agree to the schedule set forth, including the material to be covered, that they understand self-study augmented by group study is key to meeting their goals, and that no group can be delayed because one or more parties fails to accomplish assignments. Assignments should include due dates, and the schedule should be followed as closely as possible. Provide due dates at the first session. NOTE: These suggested guidelines will be customized based on experience, successful practices, and feedback. Facilitators shall keep a list of questions and answers for a future FAQ pamphlet.

#### **Study Group Guidelines**

The first face-to-face or online study group session should be an orientation to the program and an assessment of the candidates' abilities. Each candidate should complete the *AAMT Multiple Choice Self-Assessment* to determine skill level.

Facilitators may want to consider the *RMT or CMT Prep Assessment Course* offered by Oak Horizons and AHDI as the basis of the program. The prep assessment course is offered for a one-month period. The facilitator could structure the program following the course outline of the prep assessment course.

The new *RMT Review Guide* and *CMT Review Guide*, published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins is an alternative to the Prep Assessment courses. It could be used to provide structure for the study group or as a pre- and postcourse assessment tool.

Approximately 60% of each exam is devoted to multiple choice questions dealing with medical transcription-related knowledge. The other 40% is devoted to transcription performance with about 55% of the items in the performance section of the exam transcription, 30% editing, and 15% proofreading against the audio. The practical section uses dictation snippets, not full reports, and reference materials are not allowed.

Since the exam is both theoretical and practical, it is recommended that facilitators structure group sessions by spending a portion of each meeting in practical application of transcription performance. Have candidates practice self-assessment tapes, then review the transcripts as a group. The transcription could be done prior to meeting, then review with the group. Facilitators can use the practical portion of the study-group session to reinforce theory reviewed at the beginning of the session. Although a 6-week schedule is illustrated, the topics could be easily spread over 8 weeks or more.

Other suggestions for each study session includes the following.

- Cover 1 to 2 chapters per week.
- Complete exercises for each chapter of selected text.
- Review prefixes and suffixes.
- Review punctuation and grammar.
- Select items weekly from the BOS for discussion.
- Review common drugs and their uses.

## **Suggested Course Outline**

### **Week One**

- Hold general orientation.
- Provide syllabus.
- Complete AAMT Multiple Choice Self-Assessment.
- Review Candidate Guide.

### **Week Two**

Anatomy and physiology

- Review structure and function of cells and tissues.
- Review structure and function of organs and systems.
- Review the spelling and meaning of prefixes, suffixes, combining forms, and root words.
- Review the spelling and terminology related to anatomy/physiology, clinical medicine, pharmacology, laboratory medicine, pathology, imaging studies, and other diagnostic studies (e.g., EKG, EEG, EMG, etc.).
- Review report types including operative reports, procedure notes, consultation reports, discharge summaries, history & physicals, imaging studies, pathology reports, clinic notes, letters, progress notes, the SOAP and HPIP formats.

### **Week Three**

Disease processes

- Review names of common diseases and conditions.

- Review signs and symptoms of common diseases and conditions.
- Review diagnostic procedures and treatment for common diseases and conditions.
- Review specialty reports.
- Review transcription issues related to units of measure, medical symbols, abbreviations, lab data, imaging data, plus drug indications and dosages.

#### **Week Four**

##### English language

- Review basic grammar rules.
- Review punctuation rules.
- Review English usage.
- Review the spelling and meaning of English words, including homonyms (recommend “Googling” for most frequently misspelled/misused English words).
- Review the spelling and meaning of documented medical abbreviations, acronyms, eponyms, homonyms (the BOS has a list), and synonyms.
- Review plural forms of medical terms (good review in appendix of *Sloane’s Medical Word Book* [Elsevier]).
- Review style issues (recommend *AAMT Book of Style Student Workbook*)
- Review specialty terminology and spelling including the following.

allergy & immunology	cardiology	emergency medicine	endocrinology
family medicine	gastroenterology	general surgery	hematology/oncology
infectious disease	neurology	Ob/Gyn	ophthalmology
orthopedics	otorhinolaryngology	pediatrics	physical med/rehab.
podiatry	psychiatry/psychology	Pulmonary medicine	urology

#### **Week Five**

- Review the healthcare record and medicolegal issues important to transcription.
- Review basic medical report types and the elements of each.
- Review regulatory requirements (HIPAA, JCAHO, etc.).
- Review principles and processes for keeping audit trails.
- Review the purpose and content of the healthcare document.
- Identify risk management issues.
- Review specialty terminology and spelling including the following.

alternative medicine	cardiac surgery	chiropractic
dentistry & oral surgery	dermatology	genetics
geriatrics	neurosurgery	nutrition/dietetics
pain management	plastic surgery	rheumatology
thoracic surgery	vascular medicine	vascular surgery

#### **Week Six**

- Conduct Mock Exam
- Transcription Issues Covered

#### **Recommended Resources for Study Groups**

- Candidate Guide (read carefully)
  - RMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/Downloads/RMTCandidateGuide.pdf>
  - CMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/Downloads/RMTCandidateGuide.pdf>
- FAQs (<http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/examfaq.cfm>)
- Exam Blueprint
  - RMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/RMTcontent.cfm>
  - CMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/examblueprint.cfm>
  
- AAMT Multiple Choice Self-Assessment (<http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/cselfassessment.cfm>)
- Prep Assessment Courses, Oak Horizons
  - RMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/RMTPrep.cfm>
  - CMT <http://www.ahdionline.org/scriptcontent/cmtprep.cfm>
- Select one of the following texts (always most recent edition) for use in the group.
  - ✓ *The Language of Medicine* by Davi-Ellen Chabner
  - ✓ *AAMT CMT Review Guide* published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
  - ✓ *AAMT RMT Review Guide* published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
  - ✓ *The AAMT Book of Style Student Workbook*, published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
- Use one of the following self-assessment workbooks:
  - ✓ *Medical Transcription Workbook* by Health Professions Institute (This self-assessment tool is like the CMT online prep assessment; facilitators could use it just before candidates take the exam as a final assessment.)
  - ✓ *M-TEC Skillbuilding Wizard* by Medical Transcription Education Center, Inc.
  - ✓ *Mega MT Challenge I and II on CD* by Brenda Hurley
  - ✓ *CMT Prep Quizzes CD* by AHDI

Other recommended textbooks and references (always most recent editions) to aid studying include

- Drug Book: Sue Turley's *Understanding Pharmacology for the Health Professions* (Brady Prentice Hall [<http://www.prenhall.com>]).
- Disease processes: John H. Dirckx's *Human Diseases* (Health Professions Institute [<http://www.hpisum.com>]).
- Diagnostic procedures: John H. Dirckx's *Laboratory Tests and Diagnostic Procedures in Medicine* (Health Professions Institute).
- English grammar/punctuation/style: *Gregg Reference Manual* (Sabin, William A. Irwin/McGraw-Hill; 9th edition).
- Medical dictionary (*Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary*, 30th ed., or *Stedman's Medical Dictionary*, 27th ed. [not pocket or concise editions]).
- Abbreviation reference (Neil Davis's *Medical Abbreviations* is comprehensive and offers helpful appendices).
- English dictionary (*Merriam-Webster's English Dictionary* or *American Heritage Dictionary of English Language* (both are well regarded, and the latter has hundreds of notes on usage.))

## CMT and RMT Test Taking Tips

- **Review the *Candidate Guide* thoroughly**  
The guide covers everything you need to know about the exam and includes a breakdown of every area covered on the exam, a comprehensive list of study aides, as well as sample questions
- **Read each exam question carefully**  
If you're asked to fill in the blank, only type what goes into the blank
- **Take your time – don't rush it**  
You can skip questions by “marking” them and then go back to them at the end of each of the 2 parts of the exam
- **Practice without your ergonomic keyboard or foot pedal**  
You won't be allowed to bring ANYTHING into the testing room with you
- **Practice without spellchecker, expansion software, or reference materials**  
Lots of spelling errors are made on exams because candidates have become dependent on their spellchecker and/or expansion software
- **Plan to transcribe verbatim on part 2**  
You will be expected to edit for proper punctuation and grammar, but do not rework sentences, add headings that aren't dictated, or add articles (a, an, the) that are not dictated
- **Don't use formatting or flags on part 2**  
Don't use all caps, bold, italics, or other formatting keys. Do not flag questions with comments, question marks, quotation marks, etc.
- **Pay attention to the little things**  
Because part 2 is graded using text comparison, the little things can make a big difference. One or two spaces after the period are acceptable, but if you accidentally put in three spaces after a period or two spaces between words it will mark the question wrong. Don't hit the return (enter) key after a sentence. Don't use indents or tabs.