TURNAROUND TIMES FOR COMMON DOCUMENT TYPES

(TAT4CDT)

APRIL 2018

ABSTRACT
Based on an informal benchmarking survey of transcription managers and supervisors conducted by AHDI to determine current document turnaround time standards, this white paper provides the recommended turnaround times for common document types.

Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity

ABOUT AHDI

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI) is a not-for-profit association representing the individuals and organizations in healthcare documentation. AHDI has established a code of ethics, administers a credentialing program, leads, educates, and advocates for professional excellence and integrity in healthcare documentation policies and practices. We envision a future where optimal healthcare delivery and outcomes are facilitated by complete, accurate, and timely clinical documentation to convey patient health stories. Learn more about AHDI by visiting our website, www.ahdionline.org.

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INTRODUCTION

AHDI is often contacted by healthcare facilities and other organizations searching for documentation regarding turnaround time (TAT) standards. In 2008, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and the Medical Transcription Industry Association (MTIA) formed a joint task force to research and address the turnaround time of dictated and transcribed reports.

It is now 2018 and there have been many changes in healthcare technology, regulations, and reimbursement. Because of this, in October 2017 a task force was formed from members of AHDI's Managers/Supervisors Alliance (MSA) to conduct an informal benchmarking survey of transcription managers and supervisors to determine if document TAT standards have also changed.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The task force sent out a survey to HIM managers and supervisors in a variety of organization types to analyze current turnaround times employed for a variety of document types used in healthcare documentation. There was quite a wide range of responses from many different types of medical facilities, MTSOs, clinical practices, and skilled nursing facilities in which healthcare documentation is done for both inpatient and outpatient visits. Because of the considerable amount of variation in both respondents and document types, AHDI could not include all document types reported on the survey results as a part of its recommended TAT standards. The document types with less than five responses were generally omitted because of the lack of statistical impact to the overall survey. Likewise, for those document types with a broad range of responses, AHDI looked at the majority of answers across a given document type as the standard. In some instances, the standard TAT is listed as a range.

Finally, AHDI acknowledges that all facilities and organizations are unique, with their own needs and TAT requirements. There may be some situations in which the standards listed in this white paper may not be appropriate, and an organization or facility must look to what timeliness is required in their setting and adjust as needed.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED TURNAROUND TIMES

Given the results of this informal benchmarking survey, AHDI recommends the following TAT standards for the following common document types.

WORK TYPE	RECOMMENDED TAT
STAT Reports	1-2 hours
H&Ps	4-6 hours
Discharge Summaries	24 hours
OP/Procedure Notes	12-24 hours
Consults	8 hours
Progress Notes	2-4 hours
ED Notes	8-12 hours
Transfer Summary	3 hours
Phys/Clinic Notes	24 hours
Letters	24 hours
Telephone Notes	24 hours
Radiology Reports (x-rays)	3 hours
Cardiology Procedures • Catheterization Reports • Holter Monitors/Stress Tests	 2-4 hours 4 hours
GI Reports (endoscopies, colonoscopies, sigmoidoscopies)	4 hours
Neurodiagnostic Studies	24 hours
Sleep Studies	24 hours