

## VOICERECOGNITION USAGE IN AN EHR BY JOHN INGRAM

Somebody's let the Dragon out of the bag! Many Physicians today are using Dragon NaturallySpeaking to dictate patient records and notes in various EHR applications. Dragon NaturallySpeaking's capabilities are renowned for working with all sorts of Windows-based productivity applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, email, internet messaging, and surfing the internet. The product's "out of the box" abilities and customization capabilities give it wide latitude for an amazing array of situations and uses. Many questions about how to use Dragon NaturallySpeaking come to mind, as physicians begin to weave this product into their daily work environments.

### How to tell if an EHR is compatible with Dragon NaturallySpeaking

The quickest and easiest way to see if a particular EHR is compatible with Dragon NaturallySpeaking is to simply try it! Install Dragon NaturallySpeaking on a computer, create a user profile, open the EHR application, and try some simple commands and dictation: try using Dragon NaturallySpeaking to verbally command the top-level menu(s) of an application. Do the menu items drop down by saying the name i.e. "File", "Edit", etc? Secondly, will the secondary menu items in a particular main menu be recognized also? If these actions were correctly recognized and performed then you're on track to use verbal commands within your EHR application.

The second EHR compatibility issue is how well Dragon NaturallySpeaking can dictate into EHR applications' text areas. In many cases Dragon NaturallySpeaking will dictate, be able to use its text correction mechanisms, and other dictation functions correctly right out of the box. There may be situations where Dragon NaturallySpeaking may be able to dictate into a text box, but is unable to work with its text correction mechanisms to help the physician gain the highest accuracy possible.

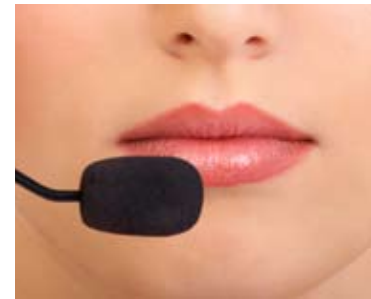
If for some reason the top-level menus won't activate with verbal command-and-control there may be issues regarding Active Accessibility, or other factors which may need to be rectified by the EHR Company, working with a qualified consultant, or qualified Dragon NaturallySpeaking reseller. However, if there are issues regarding text areas which won't work correctly, this situation can be quickly rectified by using the Dragon NaturallySpeaking Dictation Box. The Dictation Box is a built-in tool Physicians can dictate text into, correct and update the text and user profile for accuracy purposes, and then paste the final text back into a particular EHR text area.

Again, there may be other dictation issues that can be improved upon by working with the EHR's manufacturer or Dragon NaturallySpeaking Reseller in order to gain the most productivity out of an EHR using Dragon NaturallySpeaking.

### What to do to get an EHR more compatible with Dragon NaturallySpeaking

So far, if initial testing has gone well, Dragon NaturallySpeaking will now work with a particular EHR application correctly. This means the physician has basic verbal command-and-control, and the ability to dictate, navigate and correct text input. One of the quickest ways to gain extra capability within an EHR is for the physician to understand his or her workflow within that application. Once the physician understands what sorts of workflows are necessary to complete a job or to get certain data into an EHR, Dragon NaturallySpeaking has a powerful macro capability to automate these workflow processes.

Out of the box, Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical has a number of macro types at its disposal to assist the physician in accomplishing workflow automation. These macros provide for; Text and Graphics, Variable Text and Graphics, Step by Step in which you tell it specific keystrokes, etc. to perform, Macro Recorder in which you record mouse clicks, buttons, etc., and Advanced Scripting. The Advanced Scripting Macro offers a Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) compliant Scripting Engine. Note that while all of these macros



○ | COMPATIBILITY  
The Simplest Way to Test Compatibility is Simply to Try It.

○ | MENUS  
Do the Menu Items Drop Down by Saying the Name?

○ | MACROS  
Use Macros for repetitive tasks to streamline your workflow.

are available in the Solution Series products, including Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical, only the first, simple Text and Graphics, is available in the Preferred version. These macros can save inordinate amounts of time for the physician, even within a sophisticated EHR.

Another avenue for the Physician to gain ground with Dragon NaturallySpeaking is to customize the vocabulary over and above what's already in the speech engine's enormous dictionary. Adding single words, or words with pronunciations different from what the final written form may look like, specific phrases, and acronyms will add an immediate level of dictation accuracy. There are methods of adding complete lists and or even creating a specialized vocabulary as well. These tools are provided as standard equipment with Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical.

### Work-arounds, using a mouse and a keyboard, for best productivity

If for some reason a particular EHR doesn't always work correctly or there seems to be no "quick fix", don't give up hope. Consider other possibilities. Many EHR software packages work very well in a tablet PC environment, as an example. Physicians can get away from using a mouse and keyboard, and simply "tap and talk" their way around an EHR using a pen tablet stylus for command and control, and Dragon NaturallySpeaking for text input and other verbal commands. There may be other situations where an EHR package has a simple user interface and it may be advantageous to simply use a mouse and keyboard to navigate to particular places within the EHR, and then dictate similar to the "tap and talk" scenario with a tablet PC.

### What is the best way to use Dragon NaturallySpeaking in my EHR?

Typically, the best place to use Dragon NaturallySpeaking within an EHR package is anywhere a lot of typing may take place. Where do you need to place more than a couple of words in your EHR? On the other hand, Dragon NaturallySpeaking's macro capability may be the perfect replacement in some EHRs

#### ○ | COMPATIBILITY

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#### ○ | WHY USE DRAGON

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that require a lot of mouse clicking to accomplish a particular workflow or sequence of actions. And in some cases the physician might find it easiest to simply use a combination of the mouse/keyboard/Dragon NaturallySpeaking to accomplish their daily patient records input. Ultimately, what combination works best for the physician IS the best way to use Dragon NaturallySpeaking within an EHR!

## How to maintain 'Data' within an EHR for billing purposes, and still use voice recognition

Some physicians may have questions about maintaining data for billing purposes and coding. Once Dragon NaturallySpeaking has completed its task of dictating into a particular area of an EHR, its job is finished, just as if the physician would have used the keyboard to type the same data. It's at that point where the EHR does its job of manipulating, or saving that particular data for other purposes.

Many questions have been asked about this particular subject, mostly because Dragon NaturallySpeaking seems to just be different from standard input methods of using a mouse and keyboard. Again, once your dictation is finished, the EHR uses that verbal input or dictation in the same ways as traditional data input.

## Third party revisionists and where to they fit in

Let's face it; physicians are used to dictating into stand-alone devices and recorders, and having that transcription turned into text (with its associated costs.) Some EHR's may be equipped to take transcription from a "front-end" speech recognition engines such as Dragon NaturallySpeaking, but the bulk of this type of transcription recognition comes from "backend" speech recognition engines instead.

In cases where Dragon NaturallySpeaking is used with a word processor, the physician's dictation can be saved along with the document and sent to a "correctionist." In turn, the correctionist can highlight various text within the document, and use Dragon NaturallySpeaking's playback feature to listen to what the physician actually said.

Dragon NaturallySpeaking will work with many Windows-based applications. Because most EHR's are written for Windows, Dragon NaturallySpeaking has a certain level of "out-of-the-box" functionality with many of these software packages. If there are "gotchas" in a particular EHR package there are many ways to rectify that situation to get the most out of the EHR with Dragon NaturallySpeaking.

This article was completely dictated using Dragon NaturallySpeaking. I use Dragon NaturallySpeaking everyday to get my work done. Why aren't you?

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○ | BILLING PURPOSES  
Maintaining data for billing purposes and coding

○ | PHYSICIANS  
Are used to dictating into stand-alone devices and recorders.

○ | COMPATIBILITY  
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