

---

**Definitions of Scribes-Documentation Requirements** Revised on Date 07/01/2014

---

The purpose of this memo is to clarify the definition of an eligible scribe and documentation requirements to be followed that support the use of scribed services. The use of a scribe is clinically appropriate for each situation and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws governing the relevant professional practice, hospital bylaws and any other relevant regulations.

An eligible scribe has no active or simultaneous role in clinical care at the time that they are scribing the service. A scribe creates the documented note concurrently with the visit/encounter. Only the billing provider may use the personal services of a scribe. If encounter is documented in an EHR, the scribe must have their own secured individual login to document in the medical record. In addition, the use of Medical students, Residents, or Fellows may **not** act as a “scribe” for another provider.

Ancillary personnel used as scribes do not have to be employed by the provider performing the service.

Documentation is considered to be scribed when a nurse, Non-Physician Practitioner (NPP) or other employee writes notes in the medical record **while** the physician is personally performing the service. A scribe essentially follows the doctor around and writes, word for word, what the doctor says as they are examining the patient – a sort of human tape recorder. If utilizing clinical personnel, they must not actively be engaged in the clinical work **at the time** they are scribing for the provider. The documentation must clearly identify the provider who performed the service. A scribe may **not** document the attending/supervising provider’s tie-in statement or physical presence statement. Per Teaching guidelines, this **must** be documented personally by the attending/supervising physician.

It is the Billing provider’s responsibility to ensure all documentation accurately reflects the services provided in the encounter.

Scribed services may be performed in any setting; excluding operating cases and sedation procedures.

When a nurse, NPP or other employee acts as a scribe for a physician, the medical record must clearly reflect who performed the service, who recorded the service and the qualifications (i.e., professional degree, medical title, etc.) of each individual. The documentation must be **signed by both** the “scribe” and the rendering provider. Please see the example of a scribed service below:

Leslie Smith, a registered nurse, accompanies Dr. Jones during his hospital rounds. Both the physician and the nurse are at the patient’s bedside, where the physician takes the history, performs the examination, makes medical decisions and provides necessary patient education.

The nurse documents the progress note and physician’s orders as stated by the physician. When documentation of the service above includes a statement such as “I, Leslie Smith, RN, am scribing for, and in the presence of Jay B. Jones, MD”

The provider documents: “I, Dr. Jones, personally performed the services described in this documentation, ascribed by Leslie Smith, RN in my presence, and it is both accurate and complete.

The document is signed by both Nurse Smith and Dr. Jones, the record demonstrates a properly annotated scribed service.

In *the above* scenario, the service is clearly being performed by the physician, although the progress note was not documented by the performing provider.

Scribes must contact their hospital HIM department to ensure all hospital standards are met when performing this role.

**\*\* It is the department’s Director of Finance & Administration decision on the use of scribes in their designated area.**

References: Novitas Scribe Services Last reviewed date July 10, 2012 [http://www.novitas-solutions.com/webcenter/faces/oracle/webcenter/page/scopedMD/sad78b265\\_6797\\_4ed0\\_a02f\\_81627913bc78/Page49.jspx?wc.contextURL=%2Fspaces%2FMedicareJH&wc.originURL=%2Fspaces%2FMedicareJH%2Fpage%2Fpagebyid&contentId=00003295&\\_afLoop=359328201567000#%40%3F\\_afLoop%3D359328201567000%26wc.contextURL%3D%252Fspaces%252FMedicareJH%26wc.originURL%3D%252Fspaces%252FMedicareJH%252Fpage%252Fpagebyid%26contentId%3D00003295%26\\_adf.ctrl-state%3Dsvopumyj7\\_144](http://www.novitas-solutions.com/webcenter/faces/oracle/webcenter/page/scopedMD/sad78b265_6797_4ed0_a02f_81627913bc78/Page49.jspx?wc.contextURL=%2Fspaces%2FMedicareJH&wc.originURL=%2Fspaces%2FMedicareJH%2Fpage%2Fpagebyid&contentId=00003295&_afLoop=359328201567000#%40%3F_afLoop%3D359328201567000%26wc.contextURL%3D%252Fspaces%252FMedicareJH%26wc.originURL%3D%252Fspaces%252FMedicareJH%252Fpage%252Fpagebyid%26contentId%3D00003295%26_adf.ctrl-state%3Dsvopumyj7_144)