

Home & business productivity, Social services

Helping social workers tackle documentation overload

Nuance Communications

July 12, 2021



Ask any Australian social worker where they'd rather be, tied to a desk or working on the wellbeing of their client, and the overwhelming response would be the latter. However, with high case-loads and mandatory paperwork to complete, the desk usually prevails. Add to this that the need for social workers is expected to grow by 29% by 2024 and it becomes clear that document creation will surge, depriving social workers of more client time. Speech recognition software is one technology that can help. It's become the holy grail for those looking to create documents with speed and efficiency so that you can spend more time achieving positive client outcomes.

Regardless of whether the social worker is dealing with individuals, families, groups or communities, and working from the office or out in the field, it's not unusual for them to be spending 2-3 hours daily compiling case notes, completing assessments and forms, and writing referrals, correspondence and more.

Then there's the quality of the information that needs to be documented. Impartial, accurate and complete information is a must to help ensure successful client outcomes. Research by [M. Preston-Shoot](#) and [S. Cumming](#) et al, has already shown that poor case notes can have a detrimental impact on client results.^{2 & 3}

Accuracy is also vital because case notes can be subpoenaed. Plus, they usually have to comply with a range of internal requirements and legislative processes. Yet, with heavy case-loads and time constraints,

mandatory details may be captured only in part, or from fragile recollections.

What's more, as the UK experience has shown, social workers suffer from burnout. Given the issues that social workers deal with daily – child and adult abuse, homelessness, and poverty, to name a few – stress and burnout are not surprising and only compounded by the volume of documentation that they are required to complete.

Speech recognition is a technology tool that social workers can use to maximise productivity, enable remote working, improve the quality of notes and documents, and help maintain a healthy work-life balance. Speech recognition software captures speech and converts it to text making documentation easy to create and manage.

It's also fast. Because we speak much quicker than we type, assessments, interviews, case notes, forms, reports, correspondence and more can be produced faster by simply talking, saving you time, while boosting productivity.

And it's accurate. [Dragon Professional speech recognition](#) offers 99% accuracy to ensure documents are created correctly and produced on time.

When the software is cloud-based and AI powered such as [Dragon Professional Anywhere](#), the experience is consistent whether you're working in the office, from home or out in the field and document productivity is accelerated, freeing up social workers so that they can focus on what they do best – caring for the wellbeing of their clients and achieving positive outcomes.

Tags: [Dragon Professional Anywhere](#), [Burnout](#), [Documentation burden](#)

More Information

Download the whitepaper

Slaying the documentation bottleneck for social workers In this whitepaper, we examine the impact of documentation on client outcomes, the potential for non-compliant and incomplete records and the delays in capturing information while out in the field for our social workers.

[Download](#)