

3M Health Information Systems

Case Study:

Sunshine Coast Health clinicians adopt self-managed letter workflows.

Australia



This health service now uses AI driven, speech recognition workflows to reduce the time it takes to complete important communication documentation between hospital clinicians and primary care providers.

- Reduce the time to communicate with other care providers.
- Increase efficiency for multiple work teams.
- Reduce administration burden for clinicians.
- Provide flexible workflows for clinicians.
- Reduce the rework needed for outpatient letters.

3M products used

- **3M™ M*Modal Fluency Direct**
- **3M™ M*Modal Fluency Flex**
- **3M™ M*Modal Fluency for Transcription**

Health Service Profile

Location: Queensland, Australia

Number of facilities: 5 plus community sites

Annual Outpatient visits: +530,000

The challenge

Like many healthcare organisations around the globe, Sunshine Coast Health is facing the challenges of rising demand for services while also needing to find a balance between the time clinicians spend directly with patients and the time dedicated to crucial clinical documentation tasks. This dilemma has become a common predicament in the healthcare industry, and addressing it is crucial to ensure the delivery of high-quality patient care.

Effective communication between hospital clinicians and primary care, including General Practitioners (GPs), plays an important role in ensuring seamless follow-up and the transfer of care. Access to patient information, such as discharge summaries, helps GPs to provide continuous care. Without this access, patients may return to the hospital for care that their regular GP could have managed. To optimise patient outcomes and streamline the healthcare system, facilitating communication channels between hospitals and primary care is essential.

The generation of outpatient letters typically involves a multi-step process for clinicians. It begins with the clinician dictating the patient interaction, which is then passed on to a transcriptionist for drafting the letter. Subsequently, the document is returned to the clinician for review, sometimes requiring multiple rounds of revisions to ensure accuracy. Once the draft is finalised, the clinician electronically signs off on the letter, allowing it to be sent to the referring practitioner and other relevant parties involved in the patient's care.

This process could be improved to be more efficient. Consequently, more transcriptionists are needed to keep up with the workload. To enhance the efficiency of this procedure and cope with the growing demands, alternative approaches needed to be explored.

Sunshine Coast Health sought to enhance the transfer and continuity of patient care while supporting the workload of clinicians and support staff. Their primary focus was to establish faster communication with primary caregivers.

To accomplish the objective, Sunshine Coast Health collaborated with 3M to evaluate options to extend the capabilities of the existing transcription platform. 3M proposed additional capabilities that would allow hospital clinicians to use templates and speech understanding technology to create and finalise letters in real-time without always using the transcription loop. The challenge with this proposal however was the initial perception that this would increase the burden of admin on the clinicians.

The Solution: Flexible technology and commitment

A solution to the challenge was designed where the traditional transcription workflow would remain in place, and it would be augmented by a platform extension called 3M™ M*Modal Fluency Flex which integrates with 3M™ M*Modal Fluency for Transcription.

The introduction of Fluency Flex would deliver a workflow management platform specifically designed for the clinician. It gives them the ability to use front-end, real-time speech recognition functionality delivered by 3M™ M*Modal Fluency Direct or they could self-type directly into Fluency Flex.

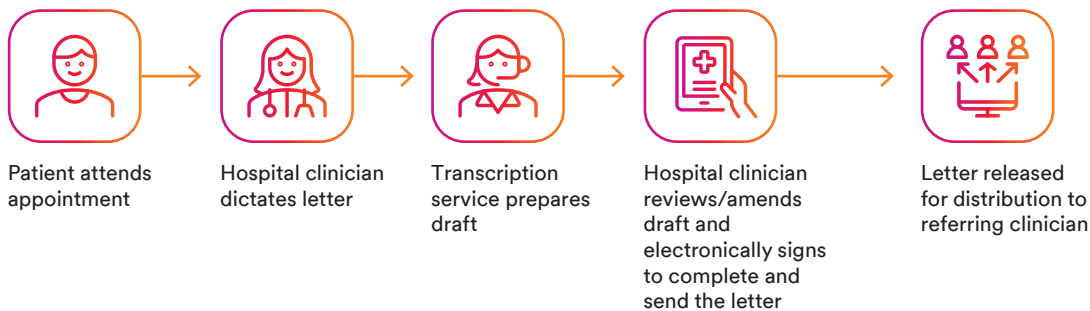
Fluency Flex workflow manager is more than a letter creation tool for clinicians. Doctors can document, review and sign across multiple platforms. Front-end speech recognition, access to previous documents and other patient-specific content, patient lists, and schedules allow doctors to create documents in natural workflows that work best for them with each patient. This flexibility provides many opportunities to increase productivity using a once-and-done philosophy.

Front-end speech recognition in Fluency Direct allows busy clinicians to speak into a hand-held device and allow the natural language processing system to reduce typing time, while at the same time capturing all patient information for a patient record, or a letter to pass along to another clinician for additional care. Clinicians can also benefit from using voice commands to navigate the platform to save unnecessary mouse clicks and keystrokes.

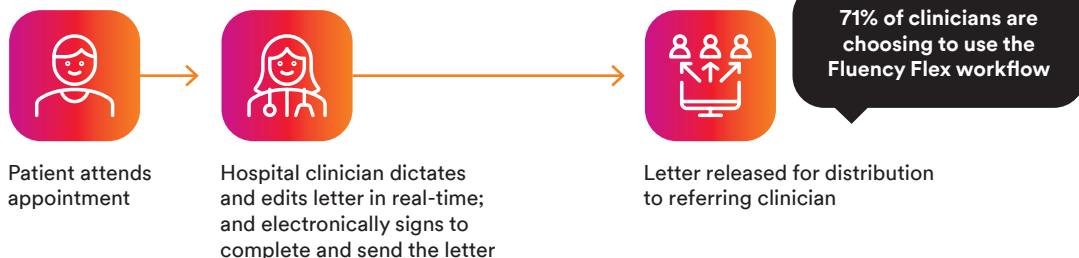
Understanding the challenges of change management involved in implementing these new workflows, 3M also recommended the use of their Adoption Services team as part of the proposed project. These dedicated experts use a combination of knowledge, skill, and the unique features available through 3M solutions to optimise usage during any new deployment.

A combination of the technology and a focused hands-on approach to adoption is part of the formula which drives sustainable improvement with these types of implementations.

Traditional workflow:



Workflow with 3M™ M*Modal Fluency Flex:



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Results driven through process design and collaboration

Sunshine Coast Health first implemented a pilot program to determine the suitability of the proposed solution with the results of that pilot leading to full implementation across the health service. They became the first health service in Australia to implement this multiple workflow option.

With the integration of Fluency Flex and Fluency Direct into the transcription workflow, patient letters can now be sent to other care providers as soon as they are created and signed by the clinician. This means other care providers can have access to the patient's shared information well before they see the patient at their next appointment.

A Clinical Director at Sunshine Coast Health expressed their satisfaction with the program, stating:

“Now following a consultation, and utilising the Fluency Flex program, we can prepare our letters prior to consultation. We can transcribe our letters immediately after the consultation and correct these letters on the go. Once signed off, these letters are automatically uploaded to the events summary tab on The Viewer. Our supporting services have agreed that access to these letters expedites care plans and ensures prompt information is available to all members of the treating team.”

Clinical Director, Sunshine Coast Health

The adoption of the new workflow options began with a collaborative effort involving the 3M Adoption team, Sunshine Coast Health's training team, and champion clinicians from the pilot program. Their commitment to supporting the change management process has contributed to the program's success.

The team set a goal to provide the right type of training at the right time for clinicians, aiming to have at least 50% of them regularly using self-managed workflow options within two years of going live. Impressively, since handing over adoption to the Sunshine Coast's training staff, the team has achieved 71% adoption within the first active year of the program.



71% Adoption
of new workflow
options



Reduce the time
to communicate with
other care providers



**Increase
efficiency**
for multiple work
teams

Call today

For more information on how 3M solutions can assist your organisation, contact your 3M sales representative, call us toll-free 1800 029 706, or visit us online at www.3M.com.au/his

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