

# Should Dragon Medical be Set Up Before or After EMR Implementation?

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 [speakeasysolutions.com/blog/2011/11/20/should-dragon-medical-be-set-up-before-or-after-emr-](http://speakeasysolutions.com/blog/2011/11/20/should-dragon-medical-be-set-up-before-or-after-emr-)

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November 20,  
2011

More often than not, physicians contact us after they have established their EMR (Electronic Medical Record) of choice, searching for a more efficient means to enter their patient encounters than via hand typing. Doctors or their support staff eventually learn that Dragon Medical Practice Edition speech recognition is a tremendous time-saver and also improves the quality of patient care by way of more thorough notes.

However, every so often Speakeasy Solutions receives a phone call from a medical office who is also looking into EMRs with the question: **Should Dragon Medical be set up before or after EMR implementation?** The answer may vary a little in the details of Dragon's execution, but the overall conclusion is often agreed:

For best results and minimal down-time, learn Dragon Medical just before EMR implementation. Further details and considerations below.

## Basics of EMR Selection

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Following are a few tips in selecting an EMR for your medical office. This is an important choice and one not to be rushed into. Take your time, perform some research, and ask many questions both of the EMR provider and other users.

- Choose an EMR that best suits your office's needs. If there are numerous features within an EMR that you have no need for, such a "bonus" need not be a consideration when making a choice.
- Ask questions about workflow from patient data entry, encounter note entry, billing, letter generation and sending of letters to a referring physician. Know who in your office will be responsible for which aspect of the workflow and how it will be accomplished. Will you need any additional equipment such as a fax line from your computer, a network between office computers, printers, etc.?
- Speak to as many current users of the researched EMRs as possible. Confer with colleagues who run their office similarly to yours.
- Ask about all the costs involved including initial purchase, set up fees, ongoing maintenance and support, subscription fees etc.
- Who owns the data entered and how easy is it to retrieve, access and export if you no longer wish to use the EMR you choose?
- If the EMR is reliant upon Internet access, what happens when the Internet is down?

- Is your existing computer hardware adequate for the EMR of your choosing or will you need to upgrade?
- Is the EMR predominantly pick list or narrative entry? Choosing from drop down menus is more time-consuming than dictating directly into a field (although in some cases, a Dragon command can be created to automate such selecting, which then becomes extremely efficient).
- What is the implementation process and timeframe? Which members of your staff, and yourself, will be involved at what stages?

For more information about EMRs, please visit [Canadian EMR](#), a tremendous source of information on the web.

## Using Dragon Medical with EMR

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Once you have chosen your EMR, how will you use Dragon Medical with the EMR? [Speakeasy Solutions](#) has over 14 years of experience in working with medical practitioners, as well as the myriad evolutions of many EMRs. Depending on the EMR chosen, as well as your desired office workflow, one or more of the following are possible methods of using Dragon Medical with your EMR:

- **Dictate directly into the EMR**, which is generally the most efficient means. Physician is responsible for proofreading.
- **Dictate into the EMR with the assistance of Dragon Medical's Dictation Box**, which adds only a few seconds to each dictation over the above method. Physician is responsible for proofreading.
- **Dictate into DragonPad or MS Word**, the results of which are then proofread by an assistant, who copies and pastes the results into an EMR or links the MS Word document to the appropriate EMR record.
- **Dictate into a digital voice recorder**, after which the audio file is transcribed by Dragon Medical, the results of which are then proofread by an assistant, who copies and pastes the results into an EMR or links the MS Word document to the appropriate EMR record. This is the most efficient means for the practitioner who is not achieving the recognition accuracy that they wish, although this places more of a burden on the assistant.

## Dragon Medical Commands Within EMR

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There are two types of Dragon commands that physicians tend to use:

- **Boilerplate text** (aka macros) — repetitious text such as procedures performed, medication notations, surgery risks & benefits etc. These text commands may also contain variable fields that are navigable (i.e. a normal physical exam boilerplate that contains fields requiring notation specific to the patient such as a blood pressure or heart rate).
- **Computer control** — replacing several repetitious mouse clicks or keystrokes with a voice command such as printing a prescription, filling out data, selecting from pick lists etc.

Creating commands saves considerable time and should not be overlooked. While most physicians create boilerplate text, they often neglect creating computer control commands.

For example, I was working with a delightful physician two days ago who was using an EMR to record the lot number and other repetitious data for the seasonal flu shots. At the moment, the doctor is administering many flu shots per day, so rather than clicking and typing the same information over and over, we created a voice command to perform this task in a fraction of the time.

The doctor's eyes lit up upon realization that this could also be applied to normal exam results. The exam results data entry page of the EMR provided a heading with a text field next to each heading. Within the text field would need to be entered the typical phrase for normal or other. For a normal exam result, which is most common, this translated into hundreds of keystrokes and far too much time spent on this task. Again, we created a command to perform this task in a fraction of a moment with Dragon Medical.

## When to Learn Dragon Medical Alongside the EMR

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Dragon Medical can be learned in a few different ways, each of which will impact the timing of also implementing and learning the EMR. Learning both on the same day or simultaneously may not be suggested, although some physicians have scheduled their learning in this way. Most physicians have stated that they would prefer to not learn two core applications at exactly the same time.

Following are three typical learning methods for Dragon and suggested timing around EMR learning:

### Teaching oneself Dragon Medical

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Some physicians implement and teach themselves Dragon Medical. If that is the case, we suggest beginning the learning process approximately one month before EMR implementation. This will give you an opportunity to spend the time necessary working on

achieving close to 100% accuracy as well as discover the most efficient means to use Dragon Medical. If you are using Microsoft Office with Dragon Medical, install Dragon Medical AFTER MS Office.

## Brief Dragon Medical Training

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Some physicians opt for a single, brief training session in using Dragon Medical with their EMR. If so, this is best accomplished about one week prior to EMR implementation (to give an opportunity to practice) or just after EMR implementation.

## Complete Dragon Medical Training

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Speakeasy Solutions' most successful Dragon Medical users opt for a complete training solution; that is typically 3 two-hour training sessions. Such training ensures both speech recognition and EMR adoption as quickly as possible, removing guesswork such as:

- "How do I best dictate the narrative?"
- "How do I save time through command creation?" and
- "How can I achieve near, if not, 100% accuracy?"

In this case we suggest the first training session approximately 1-2 weeks prior to EMR implementation, the second training session just before or after EMR implementation and the final session just after the EMR go live date. Some of our clients also find a Dragon Medical follow-up session very useful about one month after their third Dragon Medical training session.

## Timeline Summary

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1. Research and choose an EMR.
2. Acquire all hardware necessary for the EMR.
3. Ensure all hardware and software (not necessarily EMR at this juncture) is set up appropriately including networks, backup solutions, MS Office.
4. Acquire Dragon Medical and begin learning.
5. Implement EMR.
6. Fine tune Dragon Medical and EMR integration.

## Purchasing Dragon Medical & Related Services

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Do not hesitate to contact Speakeasy Solutions at any point in the above timeline to discuss your Dragon Medical speech recognition solution. We will provide you with advice, as desired, along with estimates for a product only, a la carte or complete Dragon Medical solution (again, as desired).

If you do not have time to place a phone call, please feel free to request a quote with our online form. Speakeasy Solutions provides Dragon Medical and related microphones and digital voice recorders, as well as services (installation, training, support and customization) across Canada. If you reside outside of Canada, please visit the Nuance website to find a solution provider.

We look forward to working with you and assisting you in productively using your EMR with Dragon Medical.