

# RESEARCH TO CLINICAL PRACTICE

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## DOCUMENTATION OF PATIENT CARE IN ATHLETIC TRAINING

Athletic Training Practice-Based Research Network (AT-PBRN) members concluded the top three reasons for documenting patient care are **communication, monitoring patient care,** and **legal implications.** The group also explains that athletic trainers' documentation strategies and documentation time are similar to other health care professionals, but documentation specific to athletic training may vary based on location/setting. *Nottingham et al, 2017*



### NATA FOUNDATION FUNDED RESEARCH

Sara Nottingham, EdD, LAT, ATC

**"Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Personalized Educational Intervention to Improve Athletic Trainers' Knowledge of Clinical Documentation"**

*Online continuing education programming effectively increases athletic trainers' knowledge of clinical documentation. Participants prefer a variety of learning resources that are interactive and engaging compared to passive reading materials.*

### DOCUMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Set time aside dedicated to documentation
- Use an EMR
- Adopt documentation **guidelines** specific to high quality documentation and improving patient care
- Discuss documentation expectations with your employer. If there is a lack of guidance, discuss how to maximize legal protection (incident reports, approved abbreviations, etc.)
- Provide opportunities for students to practice and be evaluated on documentation throughout clinical experiences and encourage preceptors to reach out to athletic training programs for guidance

### DO THE STRATEGIES WORK?

Athletic trainers who work in clinics or emerging settings self-reported being efficient at documentation. Many of the settings included in this study had an EMR as well as regulatory guidelines and requirements. Many athletic trainers mentioned documenting after seeing each patient which may not be practical in many traditional settings; therefore, requesting dedicated time for documentation and creating documentation guidelines with the employer (as demonstrated in many emerging settings) may improve documentation habits and improve patient care. *Nottingham et al, 2021*

### Read the articles below to learn more about documentation improvement strategies:

- The Critical Need for Advanced Training in Electronic Records Use: Implications for Clinical Practice, Education, and the Advancement of Athletic Training*
- Future Strategies to Enhance Patient Care Documentation Among Athletic Trainers: A Report From the Athletic Training Practice-Based Research Network*
- Patient Care Documentation in the Secondary School Setting: Unique Challenges and Needs*
- Preceptors' Frequency and Supervision of Athletic Training Students' Medical Documentation During Clinical Education*
- Collegiate Athletic Trainers' Self-Reported Strategies and Motives for Using Electronic Medical Record Systems and Investigations Into Meaningful Use*

### PODCASTS

[Dr. Long – Sports Medicine Broadcast Documentation Tips - 561](#) - The Sports Medicine Broadcast

[Justifying Your Value as an Athletic Trainer - 316](#) - The Sports Medicine Broadcast



### RESOURCES

- [Documentation Best Practice Guidelines](#)
- [CORE-AT Electronic Medical Record and Injury Surveillance System \(Free to Use\)](#)
- [AT-PBRN CEU Course: Health Information Technology in Athletic Training \(Free\)](#)

### highlights FREE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

**"Documentation Behaviors of Athletic Trainers Employed in College/University Clinical Settings"**

*(Nottingham et al, 2021) (S-206)*

*Key take home: College/University Athletic Trainers use EMRs and appointment-based treatments to facilitate efficient clinical documentation.*

### ATHLETIC TRAINING RESEARCH AGENDA

#### HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Documentation of Patient Care is a research priority of the Athletic Training Research Agenda under **Health Information Technology.** [Learn More](#)

