

## DFM Transcription Services

DFM Research employs a McMaster-approved supplier for transcription services, called Aris Transcription, owned by Judy Mann. This company has a non-disclosure agreement in place with McMaster for all services provided, to guarantee confidentiality of the material.

### Costs

Aris Transcription will issue invoices for services to your research project. Costs are as follows:

1:1 interviews: 45 min to 1 hour interviews can produce 20-30 pages of text  
20 pages x \$5/page = \$100  
30 pages x \$5/page = \$150

Focus groups: \$6/page: 45 to 1 hour minute focus groups with 6 to 8 participants can produce 30 to 40 pages of text  
30 pages x \$6/page = \$180  
40 pages x \$6/page = \$240

### Cost comparison

If a Research Assistant at DFM does the same work, it will take 4-6 hours of their time to transcribe a 1-hour 1:1 interview. If the person is not experienced with transcription and does not have transcription software or a machine, it can take much longer than 4 hours.  
\$25/hr + 30% benefits = \$35 x 4 hrs = \$140 per transcript

### Setting up the Service

Please contact Neha Arora, Clinic Research Coordinator at [narora@mcmaster.ca](mailto:narora@mcmaster.ca) to initiate this service with Aris Transcription. You will need to set up the secure file transfer protocol (sFTP) software to transfer files. The instructions for this are available here:



How to Use DFM  
Research Secure File 1

### Considerations

1. Best Practices for high quality recordings
  - Clean and clear audio results in clean and clear transcripts. We recommend borrowing our digital recorders, available for sign-out from the 5<sup>th</sup> floor at DFM Research.
  - Conduct interviews and focus groups in a quiet space. DFM Research has meeting rooms available for use.
  - For focus groups, we have a digital recorder and two table microphones to ensure the best sound quality. In focus groups of three or more people, use the external microphones rather than a digital recorder on its own.

- When conducting interviews over the phone and in person, the quality that you hear will be the quality for transcriptionist. Please encourage participant to speak louder, slower or ask for repetition as needed.
- Many of the health teams use a wide array of acronyms, if they do please ask them to either say what the acronym stands for or repeat it clearly – say something like “just to make it easier for our transcriptionist, are you saying F.H.T” or “just to make it easier for our transcriptionist, does FHT mean family health teams

Note: best practice information for conducting interviews and focus groups is available on the dfmresearch shared drive: dfmresearch>Training and Resources>Qualitative>Conducting Interview and Focus Groups

## 2. Timeline

Please advise Judy Mann of the number of recordings and length of recordings and the expected timeline for transcription. This will help to ensure that the transcriptionist can work with you to set a realistic timeline for both parties.

## 3. What information to send to the transcriptionist

When sending the audio file to the transcriptionist via the sFTP, also send the questions/interview guide from the interview or focus group, and the participant ID numbers (if applicable). Sending the questions improves the transcriptionist’s ability to follow the conversation and transcribe the facilitator’s portion of the interview, especially if the facilitator speaks softly or is far from the recorder. If the participants have ID numbers, send these in a table with the participant names, as the transcriptionist is able to input them into the transcription as they go, rather than the research team having to do this later. In addition, if you would like the transcriptionist to edit out any proper names of individuals, let the transcriptionist know up front, and they will then just put [Name] when someone specific is mentioned.

## 4. Ensure your interview/focus group participants state their name before speaking

Focus groups should be conducted with a Facilitator and a Note-taker/time-keeper. Focus group recordings should begin with all participants identifying themselves by name. Participants should be requested to say their name before talking, to ensure that the transcript accurately reflects who is speaking. If participants forget to identify themselves, it is the Note-takers role to interject and identify the speaker, after they have spoken. Then, the transcriptionist can assign Participant ID numbers in the transcript. It is useful to remind participants to do this, or the facilitator may say “And that was John speaking” if the participant forgets. This will make it easier for the transcriptionist to identify speakers in interviews/focus groups.

## 5. Ensure food is consumed before the interview/focus group commences

If you plan to have food available for your participants and it is being consumed during an interview or focus group, plan to have the food brought in 10-15 minutes before the meeting starts, as often the sounds of food being consumed obscure what is being said. This will make the recording clearer for the transcriptionist.

## 6. Notify the transcriptionist of any acronyms that are specific to the research

Providing the transcriptionist with a list of common acronyms they might hear (i.e. MMCI, MOCA, TAP app, etc.) will make it easier for them to identify that acronym, which may otherwise be difficult to recognize.

7. Send your notes from the interview/focus group to the transcriptionist

If the Note-taker takes electronic notes during interviews, it is helpful to send them to the transcriptionist to act as a guiding point or referral source if any speech is slightly inaudible during the recording.

8. Transcript editing

The transcript will not be “verbatim” transcription, unless you request this, and this will increase the number of pages. Typically, Aris Transcription provides transcripts that are cleaned of excessive murmurs, (“mm-hmms”) and filler words (“like”, “kind of” “you know” etc.). The transcriptionist will also leave out repeated words that are stuttered or stammered over (known as “false starts”).

9. How do you want your transcripts formatted?

Below is an example of how a transcript is formatted. If you require other specific formatting, you must request it to Aris Transcription. This may affect the rate per page.

Example:

**Focus Group X – ABCD – Month Day, Year**

**INTERVIEWER:**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Maecenas porttitor congue massa. Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero, sit amet commodo magna eros quis urna.

**PARTICIPANT:**

Nunc viverra imperdiet enim. Fusce est. Vivamus a tellus.

**PARTICIPANT:**

Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Proin pharetra nonummy pede. Mauris et orci.

**PARTICIPANT:**

Aenean nec lorem. In porttitor. Donec laoreet nonummy augue. Suspendisse dui purus, scelerisque at, vulputate vitae, pretium mattis, nunc. Mauris eget neque at sem venenatis eleifend. Ut nonummy.

**INTERVIEWER:**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Maecenas porttitor congue massa.

**PARTICIPANT:**

Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero, sit amet commodo magna eros quis urna.

**INTERVIEWER:**

Nunc viverra imperdiet enim. Fusce est. Vivamus a tellus.

**PARTICIPANT:**

Mauris et orci.