

# Electronic Tools to Facilitate Transfer of Accountability (TOA) at Humber River Hospital (HRH)



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## Lessons Learned

Surveying end-users prior to designing electronic TOA tools ensured that essential components of TOA were identified and incorporated to facilitate continuity of care.

## Description

TOA is essential in fostering continuity of care in healthcare settings. Unofficial handwritten aids are often used to facilitate nursing TOA, resulting in fragmented reports between healthcare providers. In an effort to standardize and reduce manual transcription of written aids across HRH, two electronic tools were created in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. The first tool, the Corporate TOA Widget, would display up-to-date information on patients based on information last documented in the EMR. The second tool, the Corporate TOA Note, allows nurses to add typed notes to communicate pertinent patient information when transfer of care occurs between nurses.

## Actions Taken

- Surveyed nurses to understand baseline satisfaction of current TOA processes.
- Collaborated with various stakeholders to design electronic TOA tools using several linked Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles.
- Designed the Corporate TOA Widget and Corporate TOA Note.
- Education handouts provided to users.
- Pilot launched on a medicine unit.

## Summary of Results

Of 152 nurses surveyed, 91% identified barriers to handwritten TOA aids. Results showed variation in documentation, difficulties in locating information due to poor formatting, and gaps in communicating information during transfer of care. Standardized electronic aids aimed to minimize identified barriers, including mitigating errors caused by manual transcriptions. During spot audits conducted during the initial stages of the pilot, electronic tools were shown to be used during TOA for 42% of patients on the unit.

Barriers When Communicating with Handwritten TOA Aids

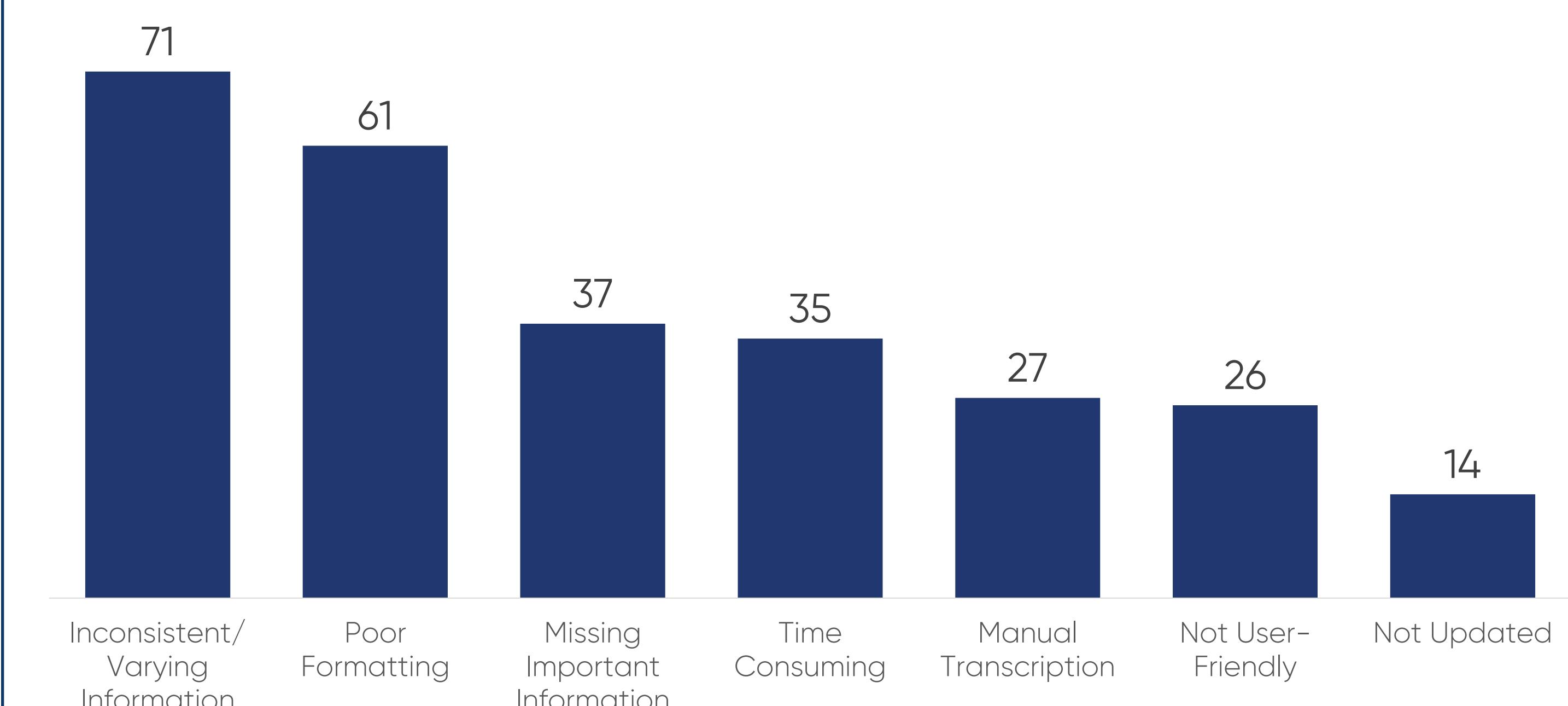


Figure 1. Common barriers when communicating with handwritten TOA aids.

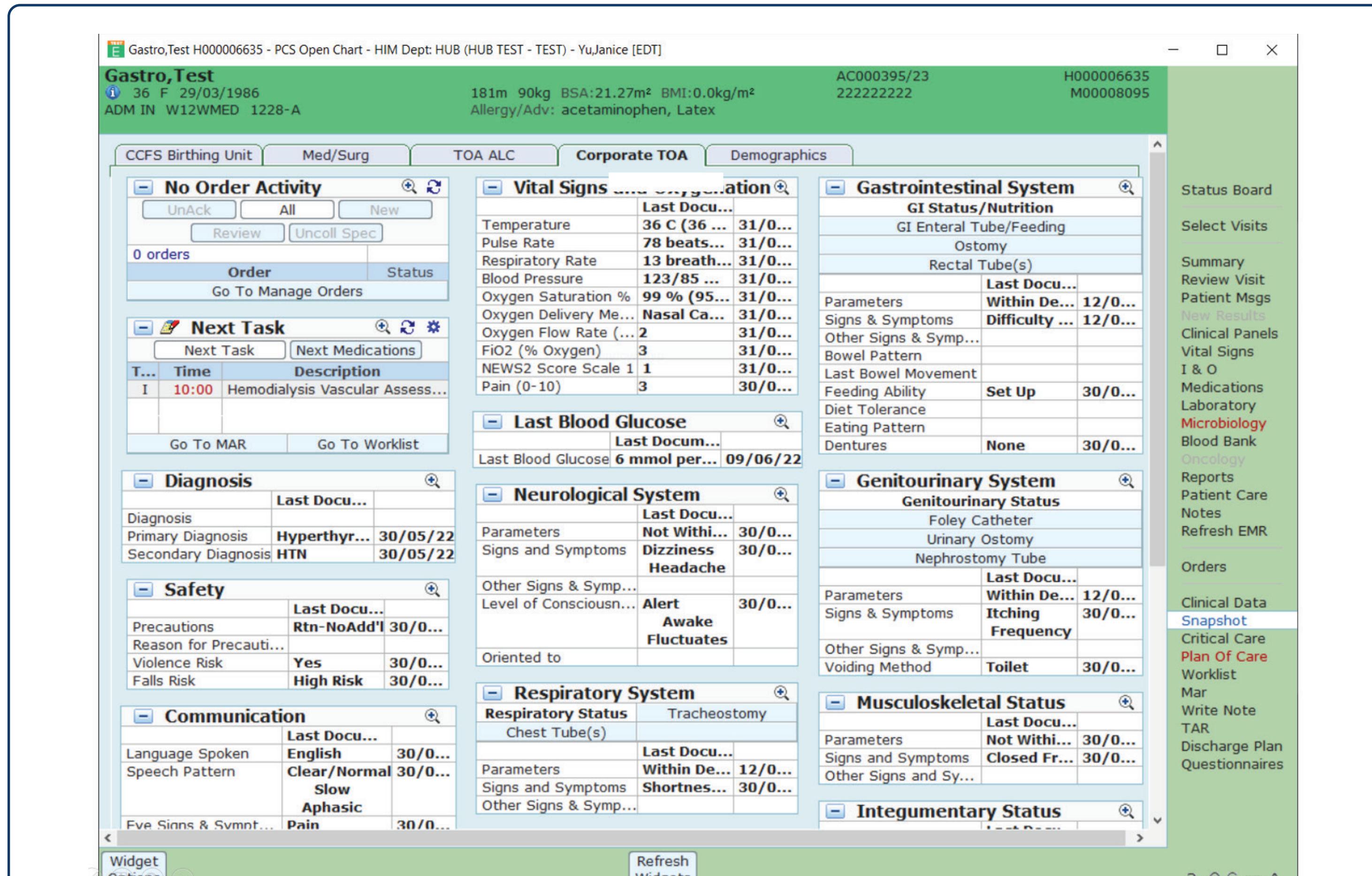


Figure 2. The Corporate TOA Widget contains pertinent patient information and is automatically updated as nurses document, ensuring that information is communicated accurately and reducing communication errors associated with manual transcription.

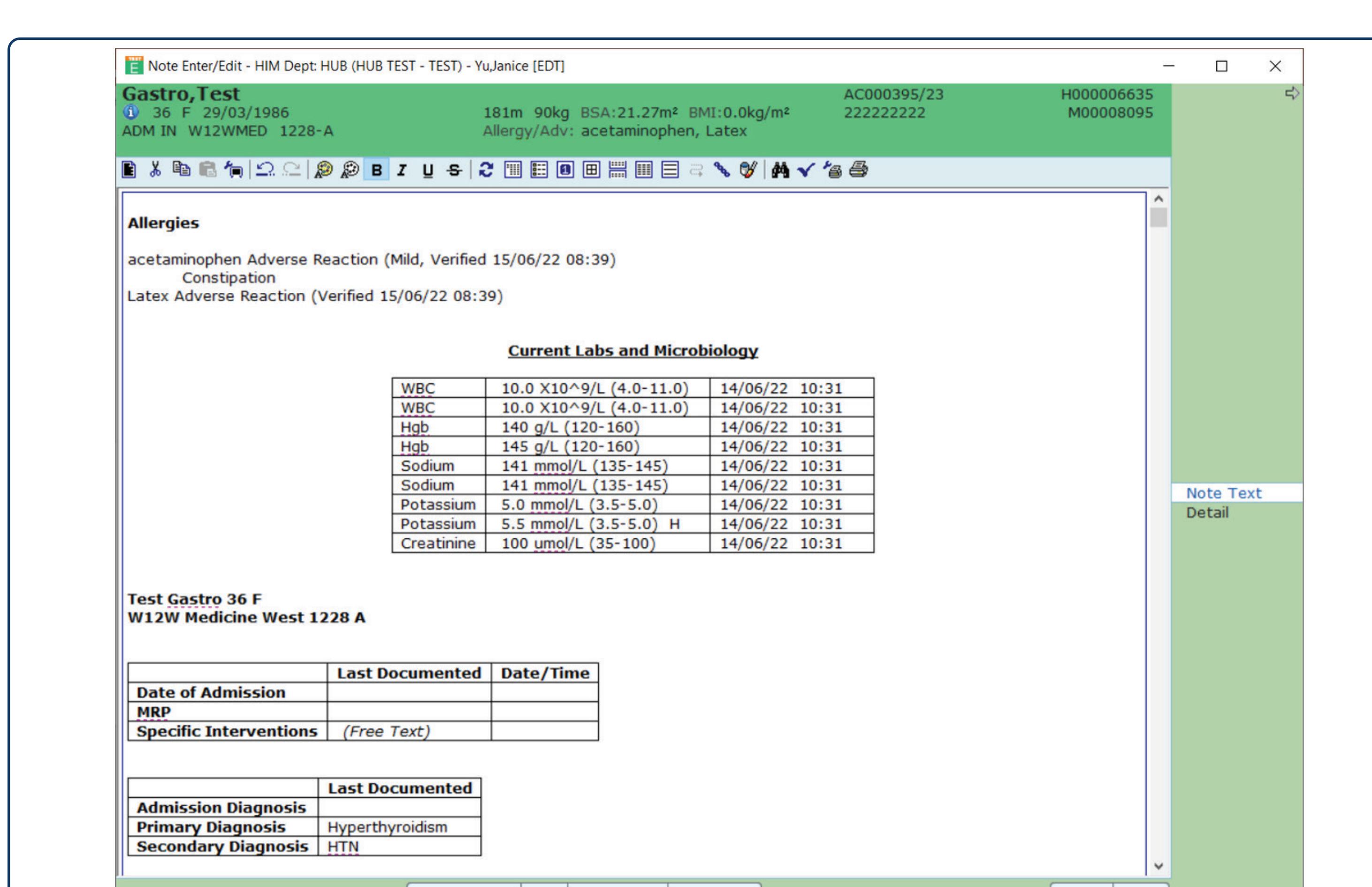


Figure 3. The structured Corporate TOA Note reduces poor formatting and pulls information from the EMR, minimizing barriers associated with manual transcription. Additionally, the note is time-stamped and stored in the patients' EMR, which can then be referred to at a later time, promoting continuity of care.