these individuals. Functional outcome reporting designed to successfully reimburse a clinician for services provided must clearly demonstrate meaningful progress due to treatment intervention and the ability for the patient to sustain functional gains over an extended period of time, not solely when in the clinical setting. In truth, this type of reporting is essentially what athletic trainers do today when they provide coaches with injury reports on the status of athletes.

**Pearl of Wisdom**

Demonstrate functional limitations in written documentation to more appropriately justify treatment interventions.

**Narrative**

A narrative style note is less compartmentalized than a SOAP note because it simply tells a story in a short-version format. Here, abbreviations are not typically used. Instead, complete sentences are written containing clear and concise information pertinent to the client record. Narrative note writing has advantages in medical documentation; it is a style with which all readers would be familiar. The omission of medical abbreviations makes it relatively simple for the reader regardless of his or her level of medical background or experience. The major disadvantage of using a narrative writing style is that it requires the reader to search for any specifically desired information throughout the entire note. The lack of categorizing components removes the standardization of the location in which information can be found. Thus, a longer narrative note increases the difficulty of quickly locating specific pieces of information and potentially reduces the likelihood of someone reading an entire note if the information sought can be retrieved in a quicker manner. Another disadvantage of a long narrative is that a reader may unintentionally not see important information pertaining to a patient’s status. An example of a narrative style note is as follows:

The athlete has decreased pain today even though he has just run 7 miles at a moderate pace. He was treated with moist hot packs and a gentle massage to his left hamstring muscle group prior to the run, received stretching to the same muscle group after the run, followed by some ice for 15 minutes. He was instructed to continue stretching on his own and increase his mileage and intensity the next time he runs by about 10%. We will see how he feels after his next run and determine if he is ready to return to full participation with the team.