HandyWork Newsletter

The N.P.I.

A Single ID

Like most things implemented by government experts, it has not yet gone exactly according to plan. And in terms of filling out the new HCFA, it is anything but simple.

For many practitioners, there are actually 2 NPI numbers. One NPI is for the individual doctor (type 1 NPI), while a second NPI is needed by the doctors corporation (type 2 NPI). Besides these two ID's, many carriers still require use of their own, privately issued ID, often times, one for the doctor and one for the group/corporation.

Placement of these numbers on the HCFA can be confusing.

There are four places that NPI and legacy ID's are used: They are box 17, box 24J, and Box 32 and 33.

Box 24 has the NPI and personal legacy ID (in the shaded area). The legacy ID has a prefix (0B, 1C, etc) that indicates what type of ID it represents. Box 32ab and 33ab generally have the same ID's, with the NPI on the left and the legacy ID on the right. The basic rule is that if the ID in Box 32/33 is the same as the 24J, then 24J is not to be filled out.

While these are the standardized rules for the new HCFA forms, many carriers want it done their own special way, particularly Medicare, RR Medicare, Blue Cross, and many HMO/PPO's. and it is our job to modify HandyWorks as these rules evolve

Variations

With regard to filling out the HCFA, there are many issues unique for each state. Below are a few of the issues that pertain to the NPI and legacy identifiers.

If the clinic is incorporated and has its own NPI, then the clinic NPI goes into 32A/33A. If the clinic has been given a group number from the insurance carrier, it is supposed to go into box 32B and 33B. If the clinic has a billing address different from the service address, it goes in box 33 while the service address appears in 32.

No matter what, **CT, NJ** and **OH** want 32A and 32B blank for all claims.

Blue Cross variations

24J is filled in regardless of whether or not the information is the same as in box 33.

IL wants the doctor's license in box 24J for the legacy ID.

NM hides box 32A and 32B, and also wants the doctor's NPI in box 33 overriding the clinic's NPI.

SC wants the Tax ID in 24J for the legacy ID.

Medicare variations

Most states want the NPI, UPIN and doctors name in Box17. Except **NY** and **OR**, which want it blank.

CO wants the doctor's legacy ID in 24J, but only if Medicare is secondary.

PA wants the doctors legacy ID in 24J all the time.

TN wants 24J filled out. and all states want 32A and 32B blank, except if you are selling durable equipment.

Railroad Medicare variations

UT wants the doctors legacy number in Box33A, not the NPI.

IL wants the doctors legacy in 33B, even if they have assigned the clinic a group ID.

The hard part for all of us is that these rules change more than a baby's diaper! And the only way we find out about them is when your claims are rejected. Sometimes, when you call up the carrier to find out why, they will tell you what is wrong. But a second call to a different person may give a different answer. (Yikes!)

To keep things straight, we would like to have the rules explicitly stated to us, so we don't make a change that later turns out to be wrong. Hopefully, over the next year or so, there will be a phaseout of the legacy ID's, eliminating some confusion. After all, this was the purpose of the NPI all along!

E-Bill Corner

Similar problems are found in electronic billing, but this time it depends upon both the carrier as well as the third-part clearing house. Our records indicate that we spend much of our time on billing issues mostly related to the ANSI format, so, if you can, stay with print image!

X-Charge it!

In this day and age, if you don't accept credit or debit cards, you are losing money! And if you already accept credit cards but are not using X-Charge with HandyWorks, then you are not only losing money, you are losing time as well.

The cost to accepting credit cards is typically 1.5-3%. X-Charge is on the lower end of this range and can likely save you money over your current credit card processor.

HandyWorks, with X-Charge, makes it EASY to collect funds from a credit card because X-Charge fully integrates into the HandyWorks Transaction screen.

It is convenient, fast and reliable. If you are tired of paying high rates for credit card services, why don't you call Ty Smith at (800) 637-8268 Ext. 238 or email him at ty.smith@camnv.com. He'll ask you to fax him your current credit card services bill and show you how you can start saving money right away
.

Vista Update

It is getting harder and harder to get new XP machines. That means that sooner or later, all of you will be switching to Vista!. And when that happens, you will need to make changes to HandyWorks. Here is why.

Most of you use the HW2 version of HandyWorks. This runs on Access 2.0, a program that was released in 1994. That is a long time ago in the realm of computer software, and that is the problem.

Newer versions of Access, including Access 97, 2000, 2003, and 2007 run HandyWorks just fine. In fact, they all run HandyWorks better than Access 2.0 because they don't have the same memory issues.

The only Vista problem in HW2 is that it blocks the auto dropdown command that lists entries in the "Find" box. You can click on it to make it drop down, but it no longer does it automatically.

HW97 users face a more daunting problem because Vista publically states that it does not support Access 97. We tried installing it, but could not get it to work after installation was complete.

The good news is that HW2000 works flawlessly under Vista, but only if your data is also in the Access 2000 level. So if your HWDATA is in the Access 2.0 format, it must be converted to Access 2000. While this is an easy process, it means that any other machines on your network that are running lower versions of Access will also need to upgrade to at least Access 2000.

To put this simply, if you are running a network of more than one machine, and you need to either replace or get a new machine that runs only Vista, then you will have to upgrade your HandyWorks system to at least the Access 2000 level on every machine. This is not a bad thing, just something to be aware of when calculating the time and expense of your next hardware upgrade.

Regarding Access 2000: If you need to upgrade, you will want to purchase and install your own copy of Access 2000 on your machines. Because copies of Office 2000 are readily available and selling pretty cheaply on EBAY, this should not present too much of a problem.

One last thing! Don't let your techie do anything to HandyWorks without having them speak to us first. That way, we can help them take shortcuts and avoid pitfalls.

Cash Practice?

We speak to many different clinics all over the country every day. A common complaint is how poorly they get paid from their networks and insurance carriers.

I want to share how we switched over from an assignment practice to a cash practice. First of all, we kept every patient who was under care on assignment. What we did is tell new patients that we no longer took assignment of benefits.

This was risky, but because all of our patients come from word-of-mouth referrals, most of them still wanted to see us. Yes, a few decided to go elsewhere, but not many.

Old patients, reactivating were told the same thing, and most of them stayed. And slowly, over a 2 year transition, we were virtually all pay as you go. New patients, still word of mouth, already knew our policy, so that was no longer an issue.

While we did bill for fewer modalities, overall, our collections improved and we could spend more time on patient care because we weren't so busy tracking insurance claims. We'd be happy to talk with any of you regarding this, so feel free to call.

How to Backup

Please have multiple backups of your data. Make 5 empty folders on your flash drive. Call them M, Tu, W, Th, F. (Or the full names of the days of the week if you want.) On Monday, backup to the M folder. Got it?

To make things easy, we use a batch file to make each backup. This is a small text file made with notepad. We'll detail one file and its contents. You can do the rest.

Make a file and call it BUM.BAT (This stands for backup monday) It has the one line of text. *copy c:\hww\hwdata.mdb I:\m* This one line of text is run when we double click on the BUM.BAT file located on our desktop, and it copies the hwdata.mdb file from the hww folder to the M folder on the flash drive (letter I: for me in this case). If you need help in doing this correctly, call or email us.

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