HandyWork Newsletter

CMS (in) Sanity

The CMS-1500

For over 30 years, modifying how the CMS form prints has been a constant source of entertainment. Nary a month goes by that some Blue Cross, or Medicare carrier does not decide that they want the form to be filled out differently than the month before.

We knew this was a problem when we moved from DOS to Windows in 1995 and we carefully designed code sections that were more easily modifiable. But it still required us to modify the code and post updates to accommodate the changes. And over time, that code grew more complicated as each state required special treatment. Well that has just changed!

In our Fall update, printing is now controlled through a special interface that lets users customize how the form prints without requiring us to change any code. Look for the control form in Preferences, HCFA Setup. Almost every field has options on how each box is filled in on the CMS/HCFA. It is already filled in with data for your state, but it can be modified by you, the user for every carrier type (commercial, auto, w'comp, BCBS, etc.) And there's more!

You can also override the general rules for a carrier type for any specific carrier. This lets you customize your HCFA printing in ways that can easily meet the requirements of even the most persnickety of carriers.

HW2 R.I.P.

Yes, there are still a few users who have not yet switched over from this 1994 version of MS Access. And we continue to support them when they need it. But often times, the problems they are having have already been solved by our more advanced versions.

We have already converted most HW2 users to higher versions, and expect that process to continue during the next year. With Crossloop, we've been able to do on-line conversions in about 15 minutes. If you haven't upgraded already, the time to do this is now.

HW Internet

Last year, we announced that we had begun working on our HW Internet version. And for 5 months, until May, work continued at a furious pace, yielding a prototype with many of the core HW features. Work stopped at that point so we could evaluate what had been accomplished, and what remained to be done.

Building a secure internet application turns out to be difficult to do, if it is to be HIPAA compliant, fast, secure, and broadly functional. It is not certain that we will complete this task, although its potential remains strong. There are some promising options on the horizon, but it is too early to say for sure. We will keep you posted.

EHR and HW

Office management systems fall into 2 categories:1: those used for clinical information and 2: those that specialize in billing, collections and patient tracking. HandyWorks is in the second category because it specializes in the business aspects of your practice.

Because of this business focus, we don't plan for HandyWorks to become a certified EHR provider. Yet we recognize the need for this service, and in order to provide integrated solutions, HandyWorks teams up with other software providers to yield a viable solution. Our latest integration is with EZ-Notes.

EZ-Notes

We are pleased to announce that a communications link to **EZ-Notes** at www.eznotesinc.com is now available to work with HandyWorks. Call EZ-Notes at (312) 212-1602 or toll free: 866 821-6837

The interface run in the background and lets EZ-Notes know when there is a new patient record. EZ Notes also attaches to the HandyWorks data set and pushes in visit data when that information is entered though the EZ-Notes system.

For those of you still using DC Powernotes, they plan to remain compatible with HW.

X-Charge it!

If you accept credit cards then HandyWorks has a better way for you to do it. It's called X-Charge.

X-Charge fully integrates into the HW visit screen making data entry easy, fast, and painless.

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 Sandra Laue at 800-637-8268 ext. 206 or email her at Sandra.Laue@camcommerce.com. She'll ask you to fax her your current credit card services bill and show you how you can start saving money right away.

ANSI 5010

Sending claims electronically has been a part of HandyWorks since 1986. Back then, we needed a modem to phone claims into a clearing house. It was expensive for the provider and tricky for the programmer, mostly because each clearinghouse had their own transmission standard.

Things settled down in the mid-90's when the NSF-2 data standard made that process more uniform. In 2000, HIPAA created a new standard, the ANSI 4010 professional. This file structure had its own complexity and many clearinghouses implemented slightly different versions of it through a process of unique addendums.

Recently, a new standard, the ANSI 5010 was released for implementation in 2011. We are working on coding for this, and we expect that is will be better and easier than the 4010 as it addresses the many problems associated with the earlier version.

Medicare Audit

We've had a few users tell us stories of their post payment Medicare audits, and we've been impressed by the lengths auditors will go to deny claims payments. Recently, our office also got an audit notice, but this was a pre-payment audit.

It seems that NY is one of the test states where claims are being subject to pre-payment scrutiny, but only for claims with service levels of 98941 and higher. The 98940 service codes currently escape this scrutiny.

Since we have a very small Medicare component to our practice, the audit was for 4 patients, with requests looking for visit data going back 3 months. This took a fair amount of time to write up, even though there might have been only 2 or three visits over that time frame.

I am still waiting on the audit results, but my advice to you is to be extremely careful in billing 98941 to Medicare. I expect the pilot program to be expanded as we are easy pickings to the auditors. And if my suspicions are right, it won't be long before every visit, even 98940's are audited for proper documentation of medical necessity as well. When the documentation time exceeds the treatment time, it will be time to reconsider treatment of Medicare patients.

Crossloop

Yes, we still love and use Crossloop. Over the last year we have used it to upgrade and troubleshoot problems on many of our user's machines. It is available at crossloop.com, and we include it in our latest upgrade bundle.

This program helps us solve your problems because it removes a big hurdle for us at tech support, knowing exactly what you see on your screen without you having to describe it to us.

Backup Horror

One of our users, Dr. O in Kansas City, had a simple power outage. I am sure many of you have one of them now and then. But this power outage occurred during a disk write and sadly, his data file became corrupted.

As usual, we looked for a backup. Thankfully there was one, but unfortunately, it was from 2003. They lost everything.

I still don't get why users don't backup! I don't care if you make a copy of the hwdata file into a separate directory or a USB Drive. But if you are like Dr. O and don't have a backup, it's only a matter of time before you end up here, in my least favorite column to write.

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.

HandyWorks
140 East 28th Street (1F)
New York, NY 10016
(800) 255-0668
(212) 889-8878
(212) 889-8830 (Fax)
www.HandyWorks.com