

## SPRING CLEAN YOUR DATA - PAST MEDICAL HISTORY

### Why is keeping the practice's Past Medical History up to date important?

Keeping patient data - in particular a patient's past medical history - up to date and consistent is paramount to fulfilling certain accreditation criteria, and the foundation for achieving effective eHealth outcomes in the future.

*"Consistent data coding systems drive meaningful quality improvement activities. Coding is an effective means to address issues of having consistent clinical terminology. This can be readily addressed by means of a software system that uses 'drop down box functionality' in defining medical diagnoses. Coding can form the basis of chronic disease registers and avoids the confusion that can result from 'free text' style descriptions in the medical history. It is preferable for the practice to use nationally recognised coding systems rather than a system which is idiosyncratic to the practice. Coding does not necessarily need to replace details in past medical histories that have been recorded in free text. It should be seen as a useful adjunct to a comprehensive past medical history."*

**Source:** RACGP Standards for general practices 4th Edition (criterion 1.7.2 health summaries)

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### Medical Director Diagnosis Coder

In MD3 there are two ways to enter past medical history items:

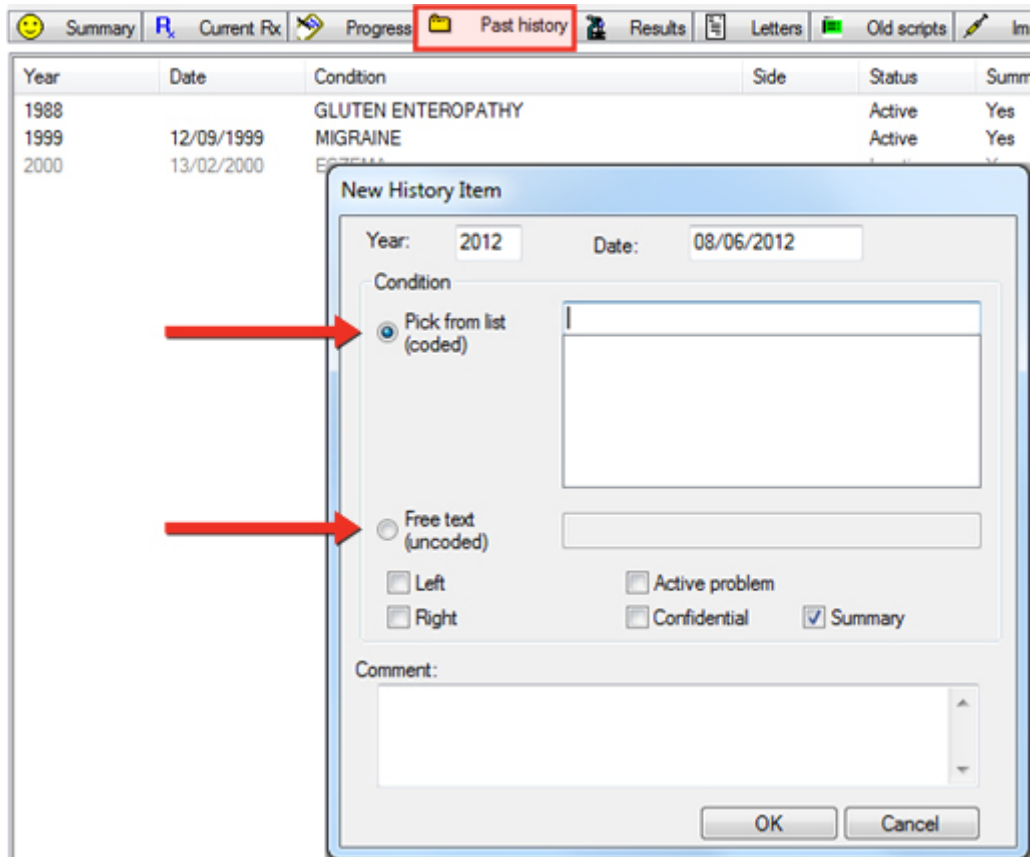
1. Pick from list (**Coded**) or
2. Free Text (**Uncoded**)

Both of these options are available to use in Past History. However if you have entered a diagnosis into the Past History Tab that was not selected from the "Pick from list" it will not be internally coded, and as such will not be found when doing searches. This is particularly important for Chronic Disease Management or when using some supplied decision support options.

If you have any questions please contact HCN Technical Support on:

**Medical Director:  
Call 1300 788 802**

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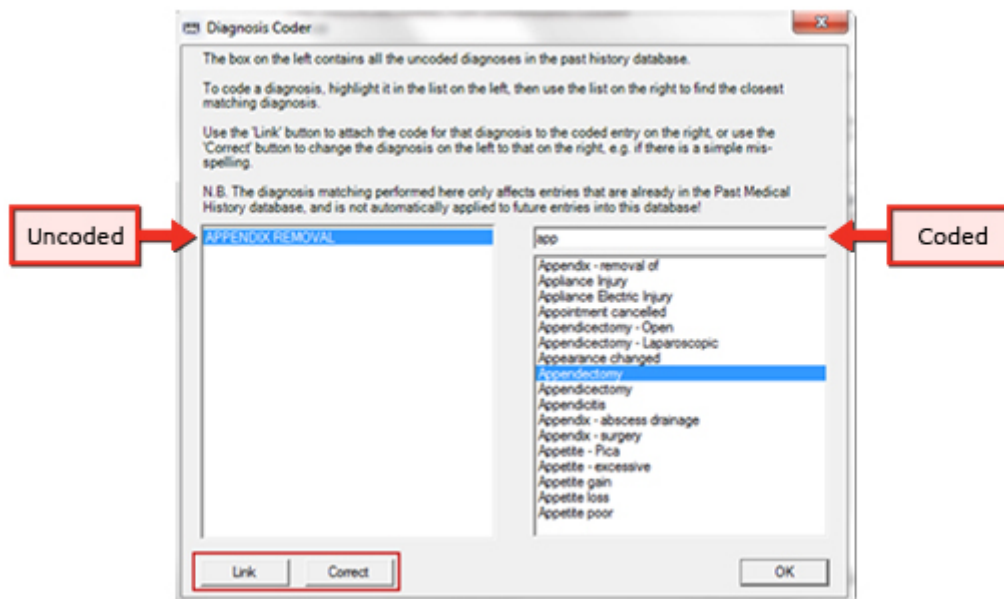
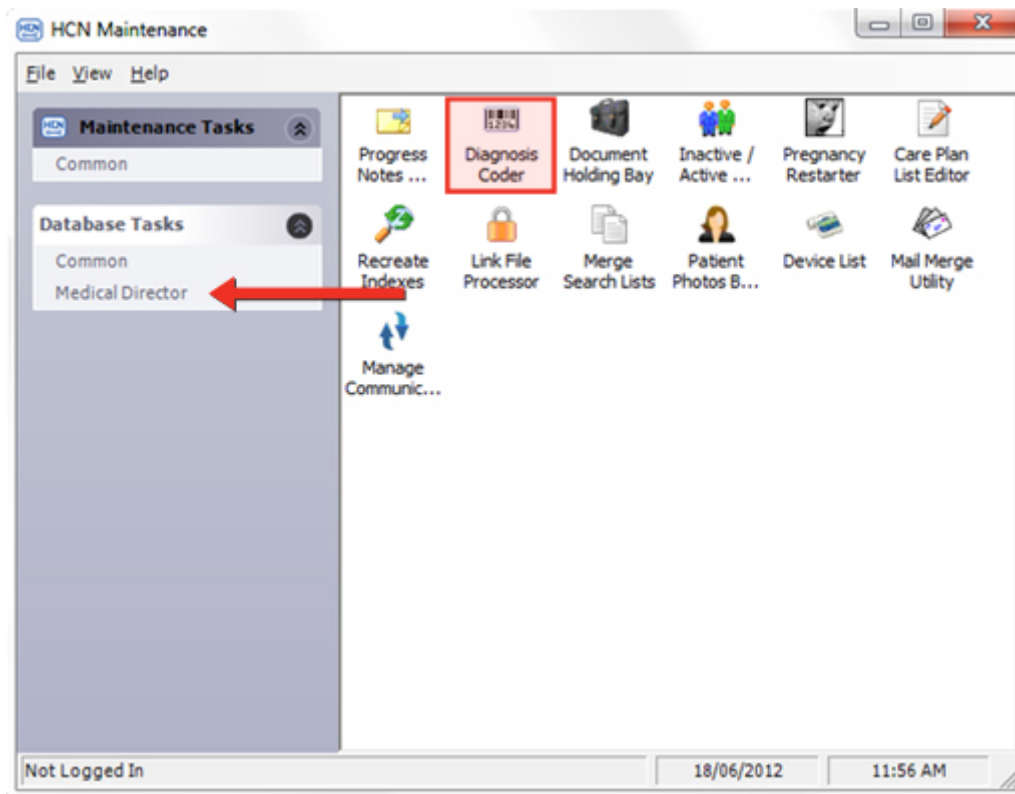
For example, if you typed "Diabetes type 2" into the uncoded section of the Past History tab, rather than using "Diabetes Type II" from the drop down list, it will not be found when you do a search for Diabetic Type II patients.

### How do I update uncoded past medical history items?

We have provided a simple tool in the HCN Maintenance (which is a separate icon found on your Desktop) to enable you to easily find "non-coded" Past History items, and either **link** them to a coded item or **replace** them with the correct coded item.



Double click on the *HCN Maintenance* icon then click on > *Medical Director* in the left column, double click on the *Diagnosis Coder* icon.



The left panel of this screen contains all the uncoded diagnosis entries in the past medical history database and the right panel will start off blank, but as you type into the blank space above it (in this example *app*), a drop down list will appear. Simply highlight the entry on the left and the one you want to link or replace it with on the right and click either the **LINK** or **CORRECT** button.

The **LINK** button will attach the code for that diagnosis to the coded entry on the right.  
 The **CORRECT** button will change the diagnosis on the left to that on the right i.e. if the word was misspelt.

Once you have worked your way through all the uncoded diagnosis occurrences, all uncoded items will be replaced and coded and therefore allow the now coded data to be included in the search tool.