

Computers

Get set for a fresh start

Carry out an end-of-year clean up using these handy hints.

It is often tempting with computers to take the quick fix rather than investing time in cleaning up clinical data and setting up shortcuts to help create accurate records.

GPs know the importance of correctly recording clinical information (read 'clean' data), so the following hints may help you start the new year with some better habits.

Forcing the recording of 'Reason for contact'

The 'Reason for contact' should be recorded for every contact with a patient so it can be sent to 'Past history' and included in 'Progress notes'. To do this, make sure no patient record is open:

- MD2 — Tools > Options > Clinical — Enforce Reason for Contact.
- MD3 — Tools > Options > Clinical — Show Reason for Contact.

After you have done this, each time you close a patient file without filling in a reason for the visit, the 'Reason for contact' window will appear. You cannot proceed until the 'reason' is completed. Harsh, but good.

Creating a list of all pregnant patients

You can get a list of all pregnant patients that includes:

- Due date.
- Age of mother.
- Date of last visit.
- Grav/Para.
- Gestational age.

Make sure no patient record is open:

- MD2 — Tools > Pregnancy List.
- MD3 — Search > Pregnancy List.

This is handy because it allows you to check and correct pregnancies where the outcome has not been recorded.

Deleting old recalls that are no longer valid

Some practices have recalls that go back years and many are no longer valid. There is no easy way to fix this, but it's something that needs to be controlled. You can start to delete old recalls by choosing a date range of, say, between three and six years ago. Print this list and each GP can then check and delete the invalid recalls.

Make sure no patient record is open:

- MD2 — Search > Recalls.
- MD3 — Search > Recall ...

Under 'Select interval' choose 'Other'. Type in the date range (eg, 01/01/1999 to 01/01/2001). You can delete the recalls on screen. The next search could be for the 2001-03 outstanding recalls. Continue with this method until you have all your retrospective recalls up to date.

Recording sample medications in patient's medication list

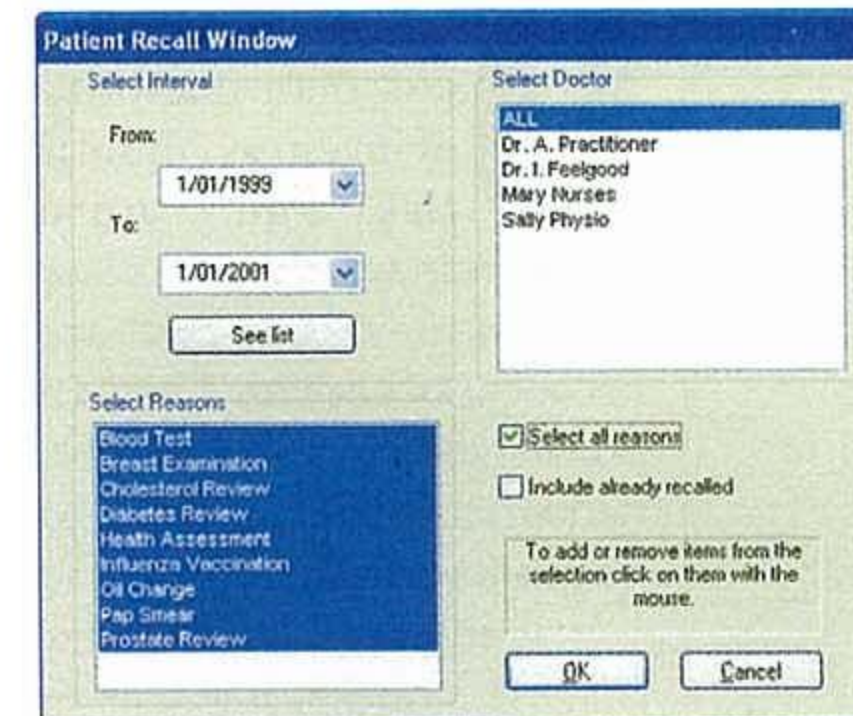
When patients are given drug samples these need to be recorded in their medication list. Prescribe the drug as normal and when you reach the 'Dose' screen, click on the 'Product supplied here' button. This provides a more accurate list of patients on a particular drug, which may be needed when there is a recall, such as happened recently with Vioxx and Prexige. ●

Electronic versions of the MD Hints and the MD Data Cleansing books are still available. E-mail noel@nevdp.org.au



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Choose a date range to create a list of patient recalls from which GPs can delete those that are invalid.