

THE USER'S CORNER



Accurate Record Keeping

The value of accurate record keeping should be obvious to all of us. We need to know where our problems are if we have them, and where there is room for improvement. We need to know if we are getting the most out of our dollar and our time, and we need to know what we can do to make our office more efficient. All of it begins with accurate record keeping.

At A&L we understand this. That is why we have set up many Report tools to help you end up with accurate record keeping. None is as crucial as the Open Item Report.

Beyond patient care, one of the most important aspects of our work is being paid for the job we do. Not only is it a source of joy and pride (most of us like paydays), but it simply makes the efforts we make in our work worthwhile, at least most of the time. For medical offices this means filing claims to OHIP. Reconciled claims mean knowing you were paid adequately for services rendered. This means accurate record keeping is a matter of marking claims as paid, marking claims for re-submission or writing them off.

In most cases, marking claims as being paid happens uneventfully when you run the R.A. diskette. But OHIP does not always pay based on the submitted amounts or submitted service codes. The A&L Medical System will always indicate if one or both have been changed.

The A&L Medical System will indicate both the full payments and the exceptions (claims that have not been paid) on the R.A. reports by placing double asterisks (***) beside the service code or the amount paid. It is up to you to decide whether you accept the service code it has been paid under and/or the amount paid. If you do not agree with the payment shown for the (changed) service code or if you do not agree with the amount paid, submit an OHIP inquiry form with the pertinent information. Should you decide to accept the payment, you must mark the claim as being paid and/or write-off the difference.

Marking a claim as being paid is done as follows; from the Record Entry Processor, type in the transaction number and press enter. When the following instructional line appears, **ENTER FIELD NUMBER TO CHANGE OR PRESS RETURN TO UPDATE**, bring up the appropriate item and type in the letter **P** and the amount (from the report) that has been paid (e.g. **P48.20**). If the amount paid is less than the amount submitted, you must write off the difference by typing the letter **W** and the difference indicated at the balance (e.g. **W2.10**).

It is also a good idea to go into the History Field (#23) and indicate what the Ministry of Health has done (e.g. paid as A003). *Do not change what you initially submitted.* By marking the appropriate claims as being paid or written-off, you will ensure that your Open Item Report is as accurate as can be. And an Open Item Report that is accurate is the best way to accurate record keeping-- which is the best way to enjoy those favourite days-- paydays.



Windows HERO

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will provide links to the outside world. "We believe that HERO has the potential to become the standard on/off ramp to a health-care specific information highway," said Mr. Babcock.

There are many systems that function in specific areas for particular purposes such as OHIP billing and reconciliation, lab requisitions, electronic mail, prescription writing and scheduling. But A&L HERO does it all as an integrated package.

With A&L HERO you will no longer have to submit your OHIP claims and receive remittance advice on diskettes once a month. Now you have the option of transmitting the same information daily and receiving RA's monthly using your PC and modem. The process is entirely automated. It significantly increases accuracy and reduces the amount of time normally spent ensuring that your floppy diskettes are copied and delivered on time to your local OHIP office. With its extensive internal error checking capabilities, the possibility of claims being rejected for omitting information (or for information that is inconsistent) is virtually eliminated. It improves cash flow and substantially reduces payday surprises.

And A&L HERO goes on to do even more. It has laboratory requisition capabilities and prescription features that allow for patient records to be completely integrated electronically. Lab reports are returned electronically. Prescriptions are automatically forwarded to the appropriate pharmacy, reducing errors, potential risks and patient waiting time. All of this means your office is more efficient. Your time and staff time is not wasted. A&L HERO is easy and intuitive to use because it is a totally Windows based program. Your office will be on-line with technology at its best working with you each and every step of the way, throughout the varying and many tasks in your busy office.

And still there is more. Email is like nothing else. Once you use it there is no going back. You will wonder how you ever lived or ran your office without it. The A&L HERO network will maintain a post office and will enable all users to communicate with each other. And plans are well under way to provide A&L HERO network users with Internet access.

"We have made some minor adjustments to the HERO product so that it coincides with features in our DOS-based product," said Mr. Yuan. "By doing so we'll be able to provide our existing customers who are interested in A&L HERO with a technically clean upgrade path."

A&L has also become 30% owner of HTN Inc., ensuring that HERO users can expect to receive the training, support and service that have made A&L the success story it is today.

"This is a great opportunity for us and for HERO users," said Mr. Yuan. Hero is available exclusively through A&L Computer Software Limited.



Testing Windows 95



We've done testing...

We have had a beta copy of Windows 95 for quite some time now. So, we thought we would share some of our impressions with you. And while controversies rage as to the degree the underlying plumbing has been changed from Windows 3.1, there is no argument that the interface has been drastically over-hauled. It has been given a new-look, new custom controls and the Program Manager/File Manager has been replaced.

If, as in the past, we compare Windows 95 to OS/2 (IBM's robust 32-bit operating system) Windows 95 has some significant strengths and weaknesses. User-friendliness is one of its strengths (OS/2 has come along way in this regard as well) and in application development. The massive number of horizontal applications using Windows is staggering. An operating system is often only as good as the quality and volume of applications that use it as their base. This is definitely OS/2's weakness and Windows 95's strength.

With Windows 3.1 estimated user base well over 120 million, the Windows interface has a significant market share. This isn't to say that OS/2 isn't good. In fact we think it offers better crash protection because of how it handles its memory distribution and separation. Each application resides in individual memory space, which minimizes the potential system crashes caused by misbehaving applications.

But Windows 95 is designed for a dual market; home and business, and the sheer number of applications sets it apart from any other operating system. It is a 32-bit operating system that can handle today's software and hardware, while keeping an eye on tomorrow's as well. Windows 95 will handle Windows 3.1 with no need for conversion. It will also support Plug and Play features which make setup and installation of software and hardware that support Plug and Play, a matter of plugging it in and using it.

Everything else is basically what everyone thought Windows 3.1 would do. The first Windows 95 programs should show some improvements that will make many application programs run more smoothly and more uniformly. Long file name conventions will now be supported, applications will have similar user interfaces, tear-off menus, Wizards (mini-programs that carry-out a requested task for you) and help. And of course the re-engineered 32-bit code that takes advantage of memory address space is the thrust of Windows 95's power.

If the computer is truly the network, the next step for Windows 95 will be an enhancement that will create an on-line connection. But we will have to wait a little longer for that. Meanwhile there are rumblings that Windows 95 in its true form will not be ready till November. Of course this has given rise to all kinds of rumors, including that Microsoft will ship Windows 95 in August and quickly follow-up with a free upgrade called Windows 96.

But we will just wait and see.



The Query Language



Reviewing The Query Language

It is not a bad idea to review how to use the Query Language. It is something more sophisticated than many of the other computer tasks we do on a daily basis. It can also be a little intimidating to users who are new to computers and/or the A&L Medical System.

The A&L Medical System is set up to offer you a wide range of reports that may help you manage various tasks, whether in billing or extracting information. The Reports Module of the A&L Medical System does this, but in a fixed format. But each office is unique and it is no surprise that many offices wish to do different things with their information. Thus the importance of ad hoc queries or custom reports.

The easiest way to do any of this is by using the Query Language. The Query Language is a way to access selectively the information that is part of your A&L database. As most of you know, we access the Query Language through any of the main menus by typing the letter **T** and pressing the **ENTER** key. (All commands in the Query Language must be entered in capital letters. And even when the commands are long, they must be entered on one line.)

At this point, the screen displays a series of colons (:) that mean you can access the database by typing in specific commands. (To Exit the Query Language, simply type in the word, **RETURN** and press the **ENTER** key.)

The commands of the Query Language are unique to it. So, you must set a command, and then the conditions that set boundaries for the search. An often used command is, **LIST**. (Others are, **COUNT**, **SELECT**, **SAVE-LIST**, **LOOKDICT**, **GET-LIST**, etc.)

Usually such commands must be followed by a filename (that the database uses) and the common ones in the A&L Medical System are **MSF310** and **MSF210**. These are filenames of the transaction files. These are searched conditionally or within set parameters. (Using such commands as, **AND**, **BY**, **WITH**, **IF**, **BETWEEN**, **CONTAINING**, **BEFORE**, etc.)

Of course, setting parameters for the search is done in many ways. Some common ones are, **SER.DATE**, **PNT.NAME**, **PTN.COMMENT**, **REMINDER.DATE**, **INACTIVE.PTN**, **PTN.NO**, etc.

So, for example, to do a Query that lists all patients for a specific doctor in alphabetical order showing the patient's name, phone number, birthdate and gender, would look like this:

```
LIST MSF210 IF DR = 'T' BY PTN.NAME (PE)
```

Before this can be done, you must have indicated the patient belonging to a specific doctor by inserting the doctor code. The indicator is located in the Patient File in field #28. In this example, substitute the letter **'T'** for the doctor code used in your A&L Medical System. **(PE)** will send it to the printer. Do not include it to view it on the screen.



The Zenith Space Shuttle Has Landed



Cruising the Local Office

What will come next? Just when you think they have invented most everything, something new arrives... and here is why.

You are at your desk, at your computer, you are needed in the other room, but what you need is the information on the computer screen in front of you. You could print it up as a report or as part of your patient info, or do a print screen. But wouldn't it be the best of all worlds if you could magically just take it with you into the other room without having to take your computer with you? Yet still have the access to everything you need in the computer, all the various applications and commands that you may require, without having to sit at your desk?

Imagine having the technology to work and be more efficient? Being more efficient is not magic, nor is it simply a matter of a state-of-mind. Often being more efficient is a matter of having tools to optimize how you do the work you have to do. Better tools require different processes, but efficiency is a matter of having reasonable tools at your disposal to carry-out most of your tasks. Every task has a means. The point is; are the means the best they can be given modern technology?

For years the health care industry has under gone tremendous growth. More recently, economic pressures have encouraged the adoption of modern technologies that can improve health-care, yet, at the same time, improve productivity and increase operating efficiently in order to lower over-head and related per-patient costs. Given a modern medical office, this means working with computers while working on the go. In fact, if you are like many professionals, you spend more than half of each day away from your desk, and still within the building. Which means much of what you have to do would be made better if somehow you were able to do it on the fly.

How is it possible if you use a computer that sits on your desk? How is it that you can benefit from the power of your amazing computer when you have to spend so much time away from your desk?

Imagine going into the other room because that is where you are needed and being able to take your computer with you. Imagine using your computer when you are walking away from your desk, or standing, talking... just in the other room. Imagine being able to connect with the information you need while attending to the patients you see.

Imagine no wires. Imagine no longer having to sit in front of your desk to use your computer. Imagine taking your information with you from desk to desk, office to office, or anywhere in between. No, we are not talking about Notebooks. Although Notebooks are amazing tools, (fast and highly functional as independent systems) they do not provide direct access to your main computer's information and they cannot be used while standing or walking. And sometimes they are obtrusive. No, we are talking about something more amazing than a Notebook. Try standing with a patient, switching examination rooms or walking while using a notebook. No, we're talking even more *a-ma-zing*...

Welcome to the space shuttle... hmmm, we mean, the CruisePad.

The Zenith CruisePad is the first remote interface or computing device that allows you to take full advantage of your PC and/or Network, including all your favourite applications, data, processing power and storage from wherever you are. Including direct control of DOS, Windows and DOS or Windows applications. At your desk, away from your desk, moving from desk to desk, room to room, standing with a patient, working at hospital or clinic. It's ideal for locally mobile health care professionals.

Its innovation in motion...

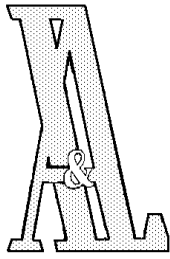
The CruisePad allows you to view and control the data and applications while you are on the move locally. These pads are light, can be held with one hand and used while you are standing or walking, and they are never obtrusive. Commands are entered from wherever you are locally. The CruisePad is a mobile screen that acts as a relay and talks to your computer. It accesses your computer remotely. It's built specifically for your mobile working style. The CruisePad incorporates the display, input, output and audio of your desktop computer. Do it once. This means you can work throughout the office where ever you are, whether standing or sitting with a patient or moving from one examination room to the next. You don't need another computer, you need continuous access to the information that is already there. You need the mobile CruisePad...

It's about 3 pounds and loaded with features. It measures 9.8 by 10.6 inches, features an 8.5 inch 640 x 480 back-lit display. It has a convenient touch screen and pen, on-screen keyboard, an optional external keyboard and operates from 500 feet (1,000 open areas) for 4 to 8 hours of normal use.

Of course it has mission-critical security levels to protect your network resources and data integrity. It uses spectrum frequency-hopping technology, originally developed for the U.S. military.

Want to see what it is all about? Want to use one? Come to our Teach & Train seminar, we'll be walking around showing it off. Your working day may never be the same.





Questionnaire

Aaaalllll Aboooooarrrrrrddddd...

Isn't it time to leave behind the cobblestone streets and computer tramcars that slowly move yesterday's information? Isn't it time to get on board the rapid transit of a modern transactional network and its technology?

Take this opportunity to find out if A&L HERO will make a difference in your medical practice. A&L HERO is here, it is easy to use, efficient and amazingly fast.

It's been on the news. It's been in the papers. The Ontario health-care industry has its first comprehensive transactional network. It does everything electronically; billing, e-mail, scheduling, lab requisitions, prescriptions, educational facilities, and soon, an Internet link. It is an easy to use, full featured, Window based program. Now find out for yourself what the excitement is all about.

Yes, I would like more information on A&L HERO.

Fill-out the form below and fax it or mail it to our head office at,
A&L Computer Software Limited
9030 Leslie Street, Suite 6,
Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 1G2 Fax: 905-886-6617.

Physician/Clinic Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Telephone and Fax#: