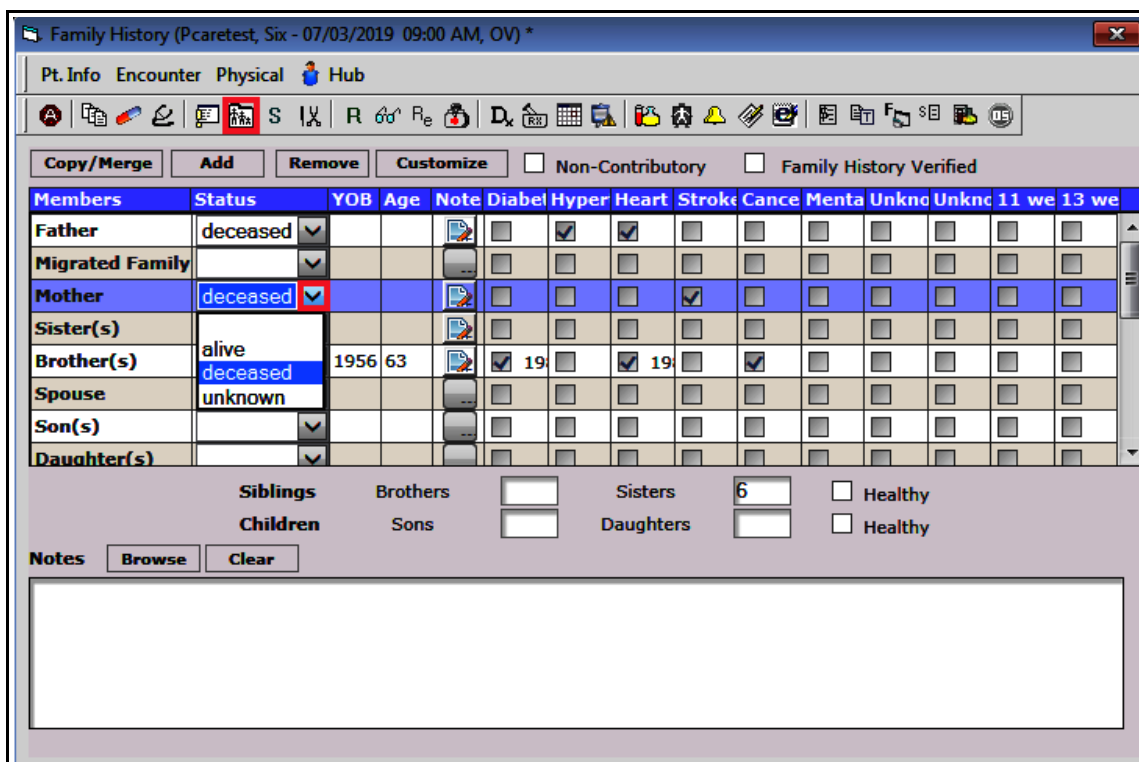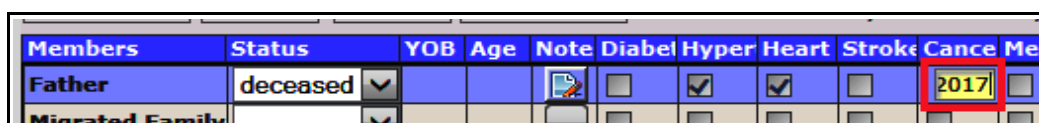# Documenting Family History in ECW 11

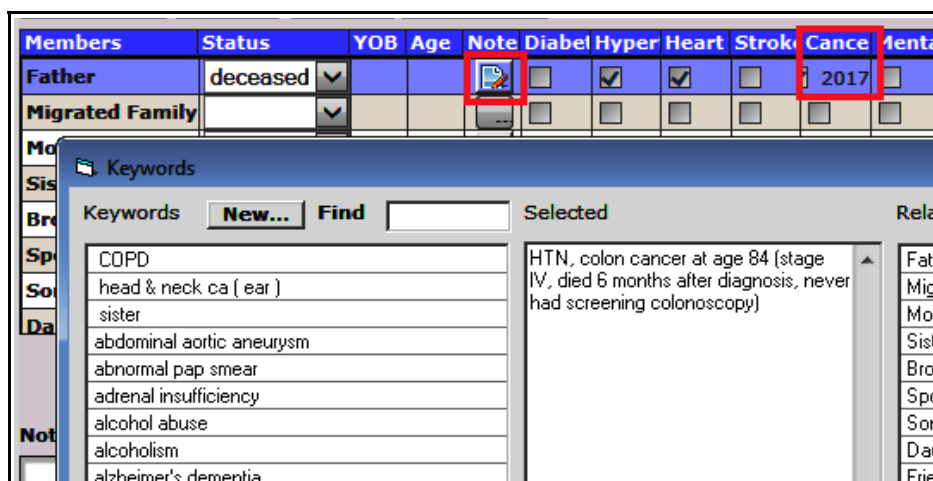Documenting the family history in ECW 11 is fairly straight-forward.

Navigate to the family history by clicking on the icon of the stick figure family. The status of each family member can be set to deceased, alive, or unknown – or can be left blank. The most useful area of this screen in my view is the "Note" area – but for Meaningful Use, the structured elements (check boxes) of the family history should be utilized as well.

In this case, I checked the box "Cancer" - and added a date in the box that appeared. Obviously, simply reporting "Cancer" is pretty useless. However, to accrue our Meaningful Use points, we must include some of these check boxes in our documentation.

Clicking on the "Note" area for a relative opens a screen in which more specific and meaningful information can be added. Clicking on a keyword in the left panel is also an option, but I find free texting into the note section far more useful.

Age	Note	Diabe	Hyper	Heart	Stroke	Cance	Menta	Unkno
	📝	☐	☑	☑	☐	2017 ☐	☐	☐

> HTN, colon cancer at age 84 (stage IV, died 6 months after diagnosis, never had screening colonoscopy)

| 63 | 📝 | ☑ 19 | ☐ | ☑ 19 | ☐ | ☑ | ☐ | ☐ |

Hovering over the note section allows the user to see its contents without opening the box – quite fast and efficient.

If multiple family members have the same problem as this patient's son, clicking on the relative(s) in the right panel will add the diagnosis (in the case, "anxiety") to their note sections as well, as shown below.

Member	Status		YOB	Age	Note					
Mother	deceased ▾				📝	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
Sister(s)	alive ▾				📝	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brother(s)	alive ▾		1956	63	📝	☑ 19	☐	☑ 19	☐	☑
Spouse	alive ▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Son(s)	▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Find [ ]   Selected   Relatives

anxiety

Relatives list:
- Brother(s)
- Spouse
- Son(s)
- Daughter(s)
- Friend(s)
- Paternal Grand Father
- Paternal Grand Mother
- Maternal Grand Father
- Maternal Grand Mother
- Paternal uncle
- Paternal aunt
- Maternal uncle

Paternal aunt	▾			📝 ☐
Maternal uncle	▾			... ☐
Maternal aunt	▾			...

anxiety

The user can add other relatives to the list (in this case, "Third cousin" was added), as well as remove any that were added – but the relatives in ECW by default cannot be removed. There is no area to document pertinent negatives other than in the "Notes" section. Due to a glitch in ECW programming, an escape character (backward slash) is inserted every time the family history is saved if there are certain characters in the note section (in this case, the apostrophe after "Mother" and "sister"). If you find these, please delete these characters, as they will multiply until eventually the enter box is just escape characters!

| Copy/Merge | Add | Remove | Customize | ☐ Non-Contributory | ☑ Family History Verified |

Members	Status		YOB	Age	Note	Diabe	Hyper	Heart	Stroke	Cance	Menta	Unkno	Unkno	11 v
Maternal Grand	deceased ▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Paternal uncle	▾				📝	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Paternal aunt	▾				📝	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Maternal uncle	▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Maternal aunt	▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Siblings	▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Children	▾				...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Third cousin	alive ▾		1998		...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Siblings	Brothers	[ ]	Sisters	6	☐ Healthy
Children	Sons	2	Daughters	[ ]	☐ Healthy

Notes   Browse   Clear

No family history of breast cancer Mother\\\\\\\'s sister\\\\\\\'s son with polycystic kidney disease.

Adding the year of birth ("YOB") to a family member allows ECW to calculate the age. Obviously, if a patient has 4 brothers, adding a year of birth here doesn't make much sense. The options at the top right in the blue band are a bit of a mystery to me - "11 weeks gestation of pregnancy" and "13 weeks gestation of pregnancy" in the family history? Two options for "Unknown"? Your guess is as good as mine.

When you are all set with the family history, check the verified box. This needs to be done at least once a year to accrue Meaningful Use points.

Brad Kney, MD
July 2, 2019