

Stellar Daily Notes – How it Works

Stellar Daily Notes (SDN) is a method of performing Daily SOAP notes (including Initial Examinations) for documentation purposes. SDN allows you to do this with a simple coding system whereby you create five-character codes using the forms provided. These codes then may be entered quickly into the SDN program to create the Notes Document. This document is displayed on the screen as the codes are entered, and can be edited during entry or at any later time.

It is important to use the forms to generate codes before you try your hand at entering notes for a patient. If you go straight to the program, the drop-down lists of over 3000 pre-coded notes will be confusing.

The forms used by Stellar Daily Notes may be downloaded in .pdf format from our web page (stellarchiro.com). Just click the Resources button to find them. Save to your Documents folder or on the desktop and you will always be able to print them as needed. Start simply by taking the form titled DAILY NOTES. About half way down the page is the first box for coding the notes. Enter a patient visit date, then make some choices in the SUBJECTIVE box and code them into the first line under Subjective. Do the same for OBJECTIVE, ASSESSMENT, etc. Then take the form and proceed with the next section, Starting a Note.

When you think you have got the general idea, try doing the same with the INITIAL EXAMINATION forms. There are actually four pages for the Initial Exam. Just circle and mark up the various choices. Remember that you can add your own text anywhere you like into a patient's notes, so if the form doesn't cover what you want to say, just jot it down because any text can be included in the notes. After you are familiar with the process and the forms, you may invent codes of your own that are not in the codefile. These may be added by editing the codefile and the forms. For the purpose of modifying the forms, you will want to obtain them in PDF format from us, or send us your suggestions and have us modify them.

Starting a Note

Open Stellar Notes by clicking the Notes icon on the main menu of Stellar Office. On the left of the window is a list of patients, which can be navigated by clicking the arrows on the right hand side of the patient list, or by ensuring that it has the focus (click on it to be sure) and then typing the account number or last name of a patient. Note that names are case- sensitive.

On the right are several buttons. All but the first one should be grayed out when you first install Stellar Notes, because none of the patients have any notes yet. To begin a SOAP note for a patient, click the "Start a Note" button.

At this point a new window will open. At the top left is a box marked "SOAP Code". To the right of that are two boxes marked "Exam Date" and "Note Date". Below them is a large box filled with two paragraphs of text and ending with:

Resolved Better Same Worse.
0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15
And below that are two buttons marked "Save" and "Cancel".

To demonstrate the basic operation of Stellar Notes, we will ignore the "SOAP Code" box for now. Change the "Exam Date" to yesterday's date, and leave the "Note Date" box alone.

- The exam date is the date on which the examination to which the SOAP note pertains was performed.
- The note date is the date on which the note was actually entered into the computer. You should rarely, if ever, need to change this.

Note the contents of the large text box. This text is inserted automatically for the first note in a patient's history. The two paragraphs correspond to the SOAP codes "IPD" and "IRE06" (more on SOAP codes later). For now, go ahead and type something into the bottom of the text box (I'm using "Patient came in complaining of a stiff neck."). You can manually edit any part of the note like this any time you want.

Now click the "Save" button. Congratulations! You have just added your first SOAP note. Notice how the other buttons next to the patient list are no longer grayed out.

Adding Another Note

Click the "Add to Notes" button (which has replaced the "Start a Note" button). The same window will open, only this time the text box will be filled with gray text, ending with:

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~~~~~  
^^^^ PREVIOUS NOTE: MM/DD/YYYY ^^^^^  
~~~~~
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This is your last note, displayed for your convenience in case you have to refer to something in it. The gray text cannot be edited. Your new note must be entered below the last line of gray tilde (~) characters.

Using SOAP Codes

Now let's demonstrate the SOAP codes. A SOAP code is basically a short sequence of letters and/or numbers that refer to a written description of something (such as a symptom, plan, or treatment). By utilizing SOAP codes, perhaps with the additional help of a check-box sheet, you can greatly increase the speed at which notes can be entered.

Begin by typing an S in the "SOAP Code" box. The date boxes will disappear, the "Save" and "Cancel" buttons will be grayed out, and the text box will be replaced with a list of codes. The one beginning "SAE:" should have a light gray background. This is the code list. In the event that you can't find the exact code you're looking for, you can select it from this list. Notice the little "+" and "-" boxes to the left of some items. If you click a "+" box, it will expand and display more items. If you click a "-" box, it will hide its items. Click the "-" box next to "SAE". All of the items listed below it will disappear, and the "-" box will become a "+" box. Now click the "+" box next to "SAN". It will display a list of codes starting with "SAN".

The code we want to use is "SAN3". There are a few ways to use it. You could scroll down the list, click it, and click the "Insert Code" button. Or you can finish typing it into the "SOAP Code" box. Do that. When you do, the code list will disappear and a yellow box will appear to the right of the "SOAP Code" box showing the value of the code ("Moderate neck pain"). Press enter. The code will appear at the bottom of the text box.

Note that you can close the code list at any time if you decide not to use a code by pressing the "Escape" key or by clicking the "Cancel" button (the one that isn't grayed out).

Before we continue, let me point out that there are six categories of default codes, represented by starting the code with one of the letters S, O, A, P, T, or I.

- S=Subjective
- O=Objective
- A=Assessment
- P=Plan
- T=Treatment
- I= Initial Examination

Ok, we're going to add one more code. This time the code we want is "TD". Go ahead and type it into the "SOAP Code" box. The yellow box should appear to the right, with the words "Diathermy was administered to the [[Ex. Cervical or shoulder]]." This time press tab instead of enter. The code will appear at the bottom of the text box, with the words "[[Ex. Cervical or shoulder]]" highlighted in red. We'll deal with this in a moment. First notice that the focus has switched to the "Exam Date" field. This would be a good time to change it if you wanted to, but we can leave it alone for this note.

Red Text Fields

Press tab two more times. The red words "[[Ex. Cervical or shoulder]]" will be highlighted. These "Red Text Fields" are place-holders that must be replaced with something before you can save the note. You can press tab to jump between them (if there are more than one) just like any normal control. Go ahead and type "Cervical". The text will be replaced.

Now click the "Save" button. Congratulations! You've just completed your second note, this time by using SOAP codes!

Before we continue, I should mention one more minor thing that could possibly cause some confusion if you're not aware of it. Click "Add to Notes" again. The note screen will display the note you just entered below the gray text. You are only allowed one note per exam date, and since this note is for today, it is displayed for editing. We don't need to edit it right now, so just click "Cancel".

Editing Existing Notes

Now click the "Edit Notes" button. You will see two items in the list. These are the two notes (for yesterday and today) that we added. You can edit them by selecting one from the list and clicking "Edit", which brings up the note edit screen. (We deal with the

"Delete" buttons in the [Advanced](#) tutorial.)

Printing Notes

Return to the main screen (by clicking "Back" or "Cancel"). To print a note, click the "Print Notes" button. You can choose to print All, by Time Span, or by Date Range. The total number of notes that will be printed is also displayed (this is not the same as the total number of pages). The signature to print ("Submitted By") can be selected from the list of providers, entered manually, or cleared to keep from printing a signature line.

The clinic name and contact information (as specified under Records/Clinic Information in the main menu of Stellar Office) is automatically printed at the top of the first page.

What's Next?

At this point you should be all set to start using notes. However, there is more functionality available, including the ability to delete notes, view multiple notes, add and edit SOAP codes, print the entire Codefile, and generate reports. This is all covered in the [Advanced](#) tutorial available by clicking HELP, STELLAR NOTES MANUAL at the top of the Notes main screen.