Introduction

Some practices routinely offer payment plans, known as budget plans, to selected patients. This can be for a variety of reasons. For example, a patient might be unable to pay the full amount at one time but can do so over time. Or, the practice might find that it can be a good way to build and maintain a loyal patient base.

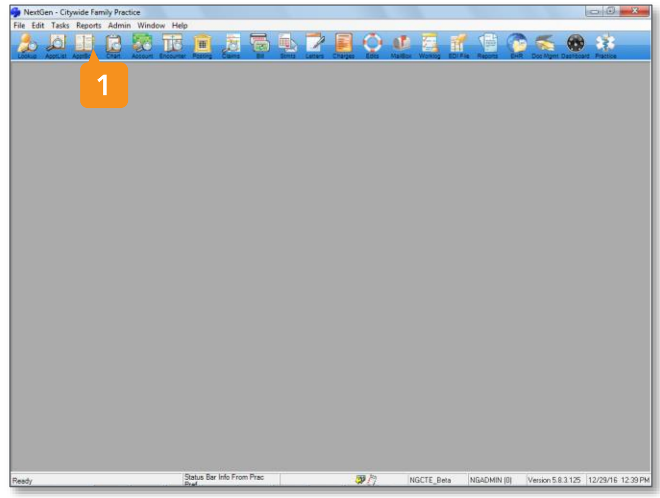
Adding a guarantor to a budget plan can be one step in the billing and collection process for a practice. After sending a guarantor a number of statements, or making several calls, a budget plan can be the last step before turning an account over to a collection agency.

Topics Covered

- Creating a Budget Plan
- Disabling and Re-establishing a Budget Plan
  - Disabling a Budget Plan
  - Re-establishing a Budget Plan
- Running Payment Coupons
  - Running Budget Statements
  - Running Budget Letters
- Posting Budget Payments
- Monitoring Budgets with Tasks and Reports
  - Monitoring Budgets with Tasks
  - Monitoring Budgets with Reports

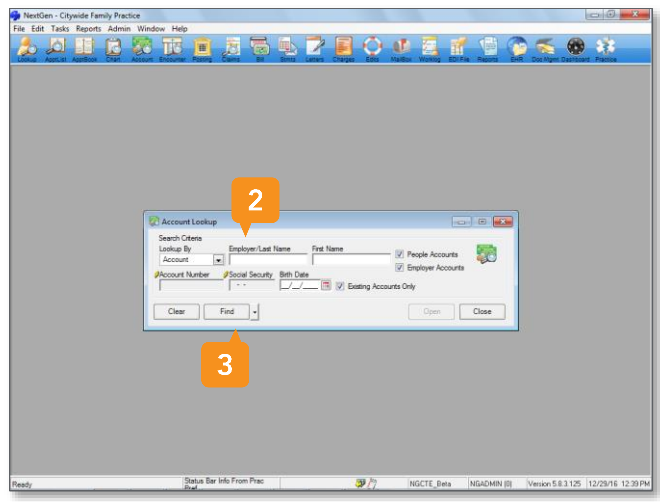
Creating a Budget Plan

1. To create a budget plan in NextGen® Practice Management, click the **Account** icon. The Account Lookup window opens.

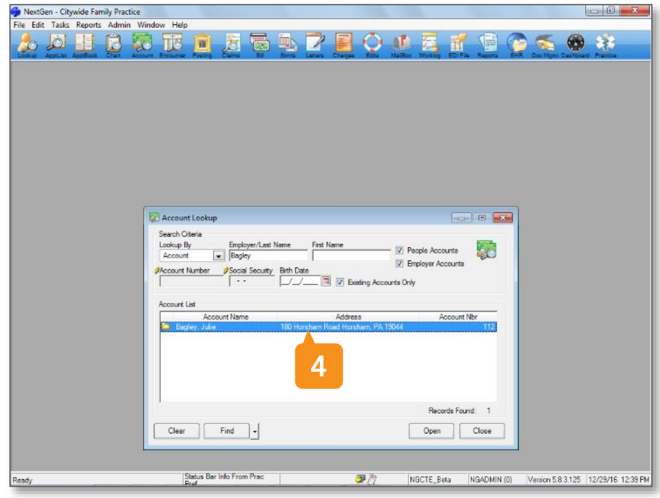


2. Enter the **search criteria.**

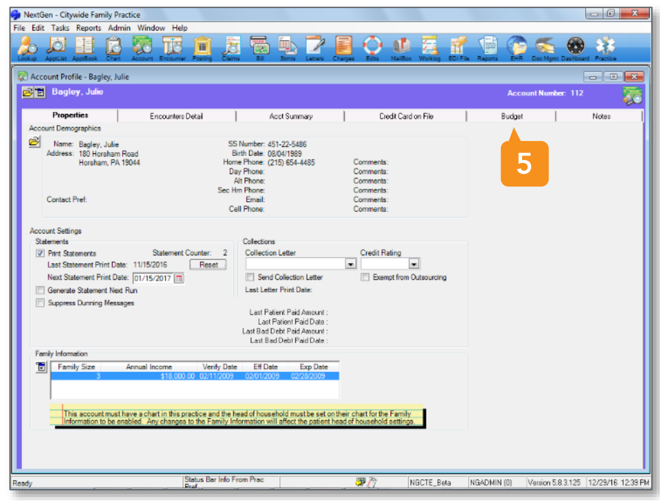
3. Click **Find.**



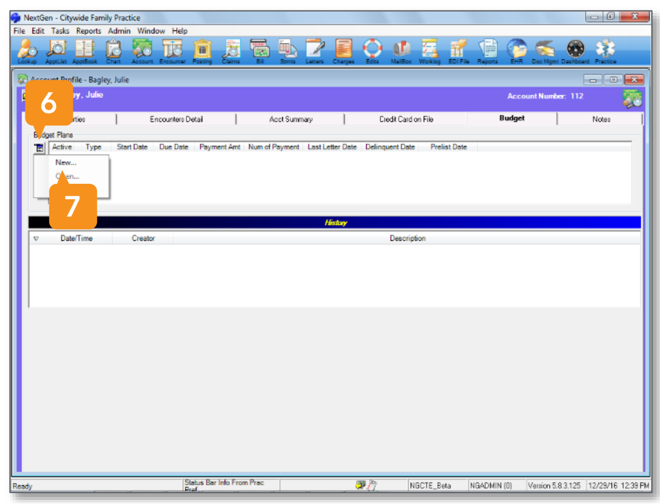
4. To open an account, double-click **it**.

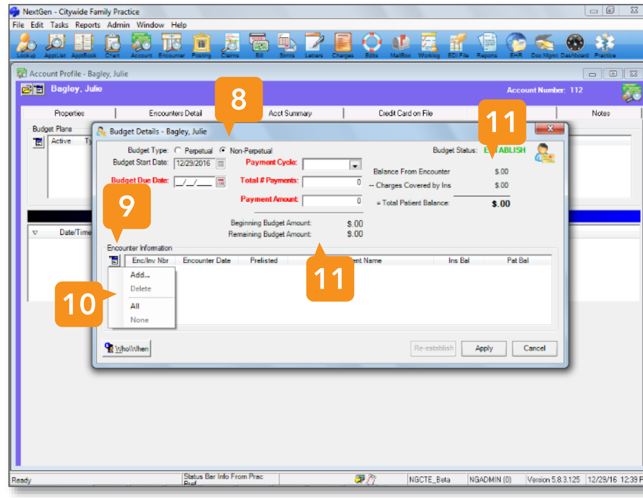


5. Click the **Budget** tab.



6. In the top section, click the **Open Menu** button.
7. Click **New**. The Budget Details window opens.





8. Click **Non-Perpetual**.

A Non-Perpetual budget plan can be used when an account only needs a budget for a limited number of encounters.

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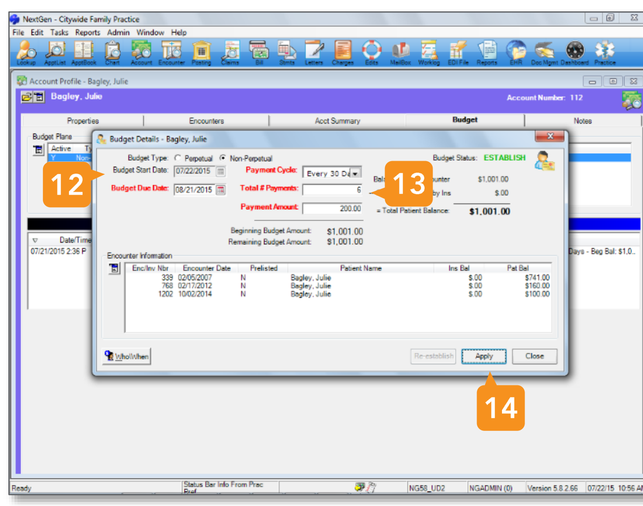
9. In the Encounter Information section, click the **Open Menu** button.
10. Click **Add** to select the encounters to be added to the budget.

    — or —

    Click **All** to have the system automatically select all encounters with a patient pay balance.
11. The total Budget Amount displays in the top section.



12. Complete the **required fields**.

The Budget Due Date is the date the payment is due and drives the Budget Plan process. The Budget Due Date should be set for a month after the Start Date.

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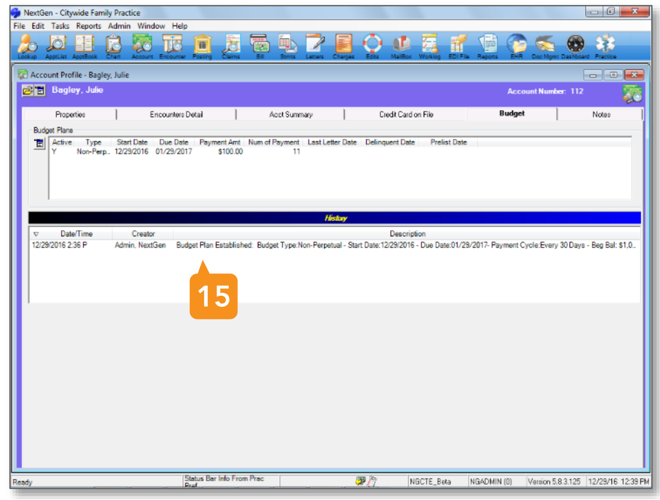
13. For the Total # Payments and Payment Amount fields, enter a **value for one of the fields** and the system will automatically calculate the value for the other field.
14. Click **Apply**.

15. The bottom section shows Significant Events, such as Budget Letters Printed and Budget Payments Posted which can be useful when monitoring plans.

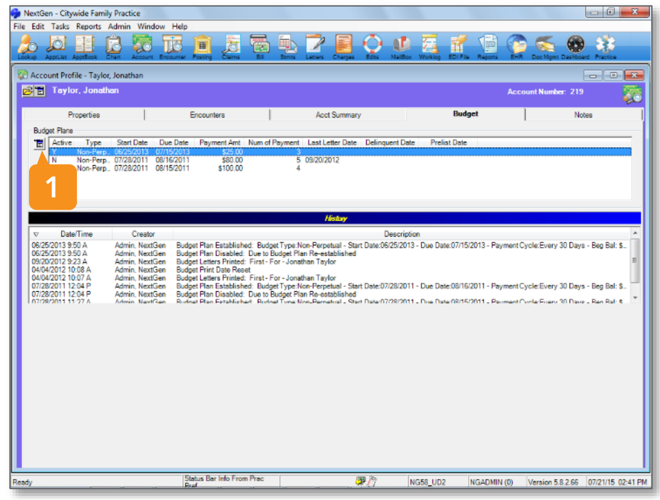


Note: The steps to take to set up a Perpetual plan are similar. The main difference is that the system will automatically select all qualified encounters for the budget and will add each new encounter with a patient pay balance to the plan. Also the Total # Payments field is grayed out since new encounters with a patient pay balance can be added at any time. A Perpetual budget plan can be used for an ongoing patient/practice relationship.

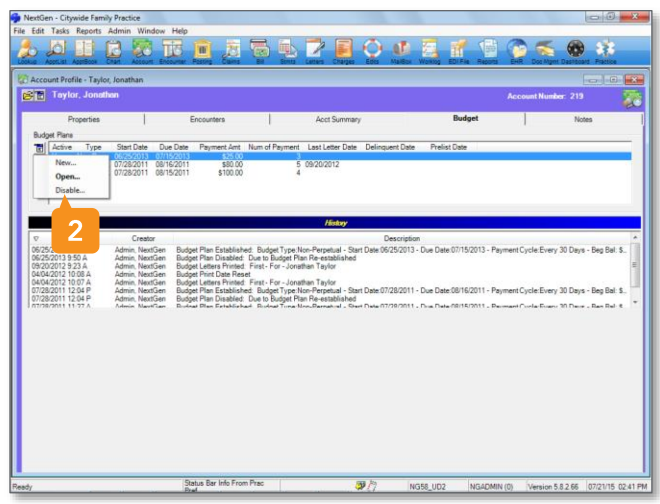
Disabling and Re-establishing a Budget Plan

Disabling a Budget Plan

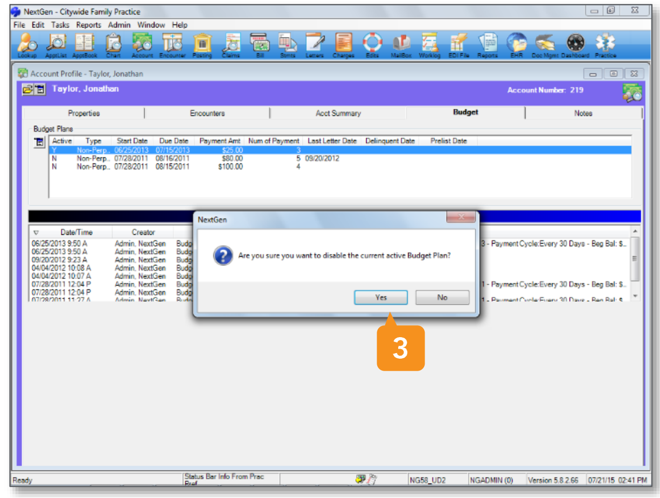
1. To disable a budget plan in NextGen® Practice Management, click the **Open Menu** button.



2. Click **Disable**.

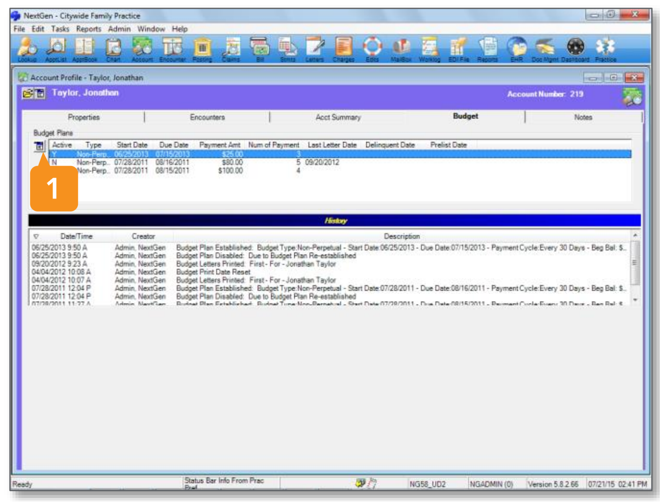


3. To confirm, click **Yes.**

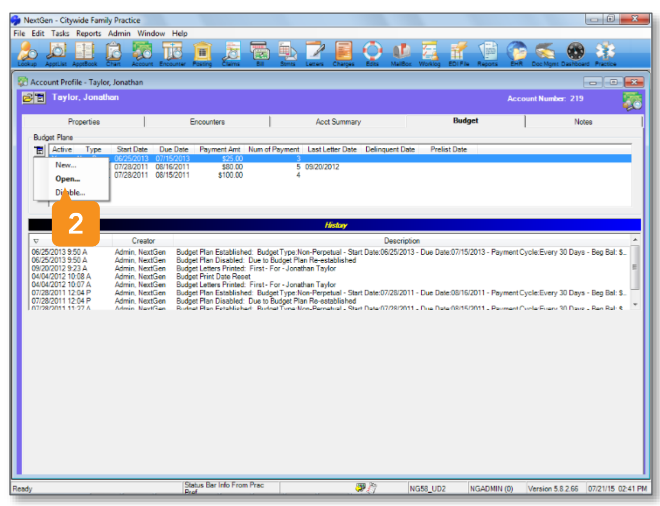


Re-establishing a Budget Plan

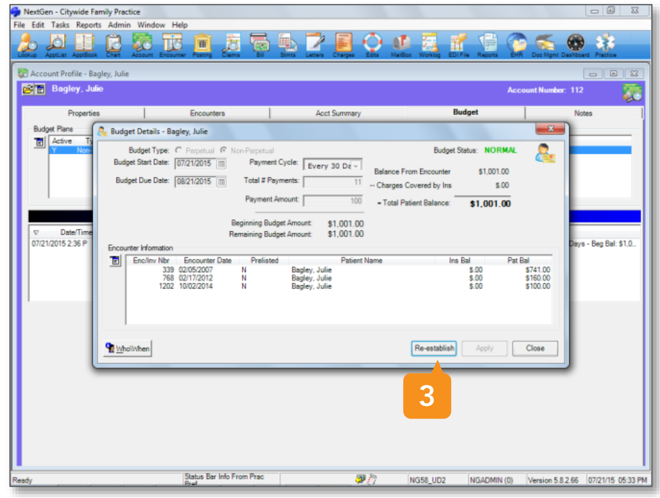
1. To re-establish a budget plan in NextGen® Practice Management, click the **Open Menu** button.



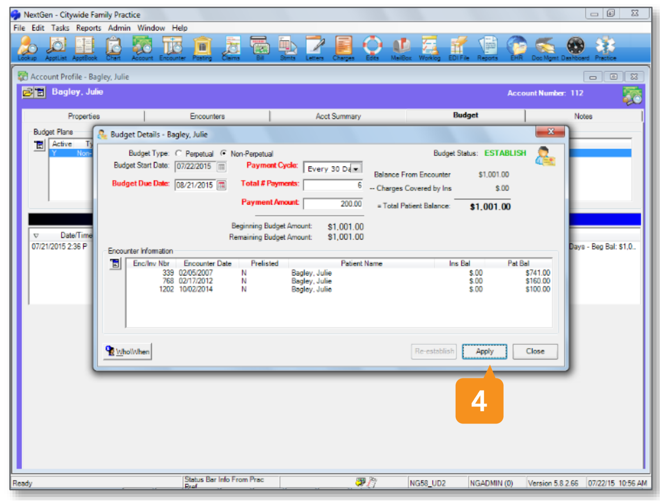
2. Click **Open**.



3. The fields on the window are grayed out. To work with these fields, click the **Re-establish** button.



4. The fields are enabled to modify the existing information. After making changes, click the **Apply** button.



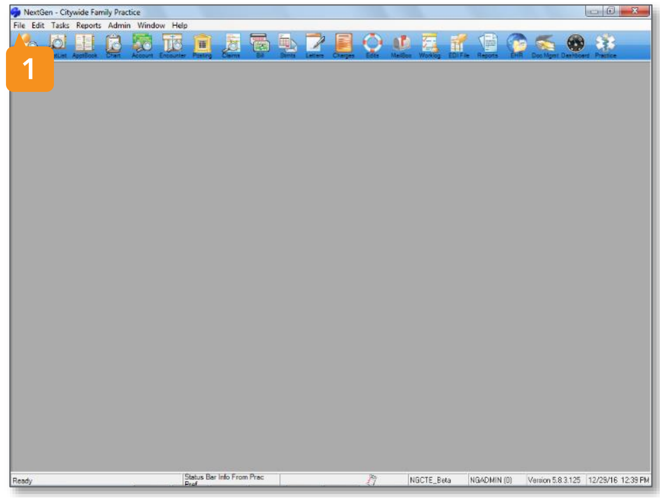
Running Payment Coupons

After setting up a budget plan, budget letters and budget statements are used to communicate with the guarantor. Both letters and statements act as payment coupons. Both follow the same logic as shown in the graphic.

- If a guarantor pays the total amount by the due date, the order is First, Normal, and Final.
- An underpayment or missed payment begins the series on the bottom.
- Any payment received on a Missed, Underpayment, Delinquent, or Prelist letter or statement sends the next letter in the top sequence, depending on the next one due.

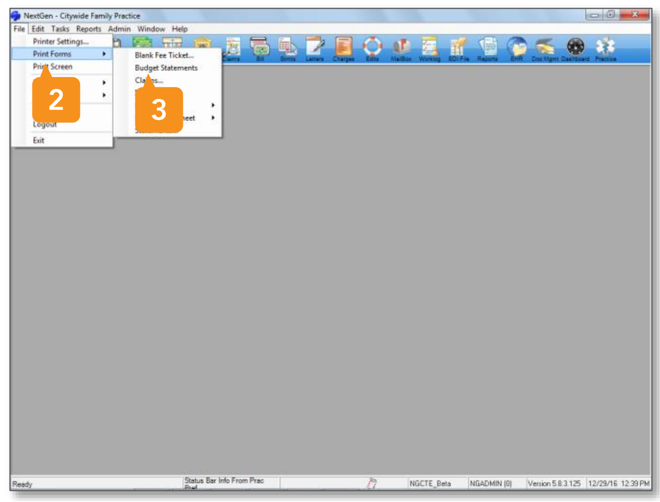
Running Budget Statements

1. To run budget statements in NextGen® Practice Management, click **File**.



2. Click **Print Forms**.

3. Click **Budget Statements**. The Budget Statement Generation window opens.



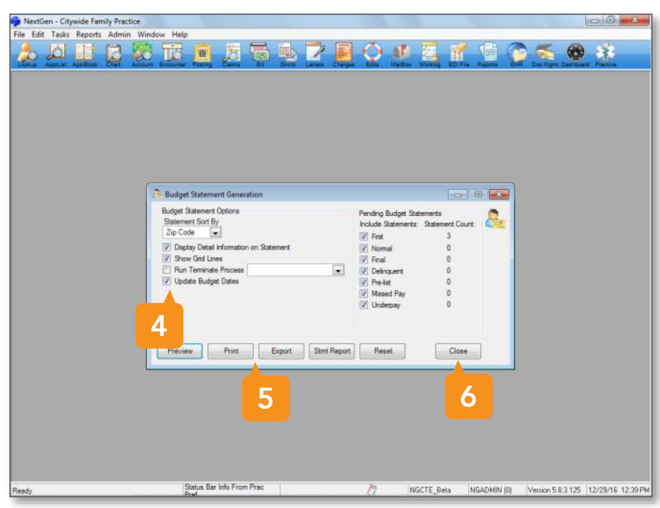
4. To update the budget due date, click the **Update Budget Dates option**.

5. Click **Print**.

   — or —

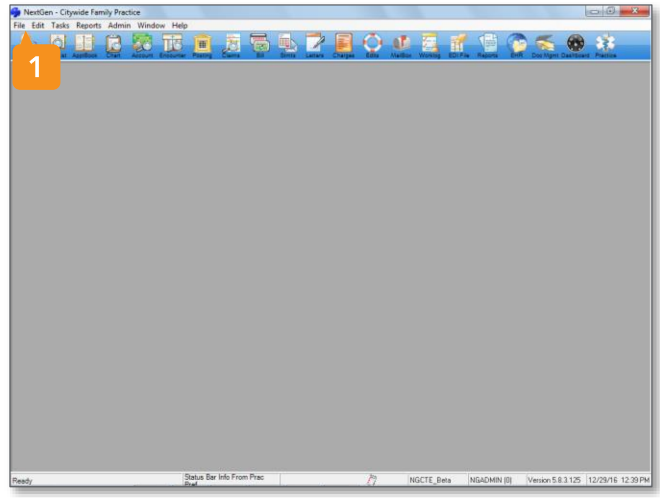
   Click **Export**.

6. Click **Close**.

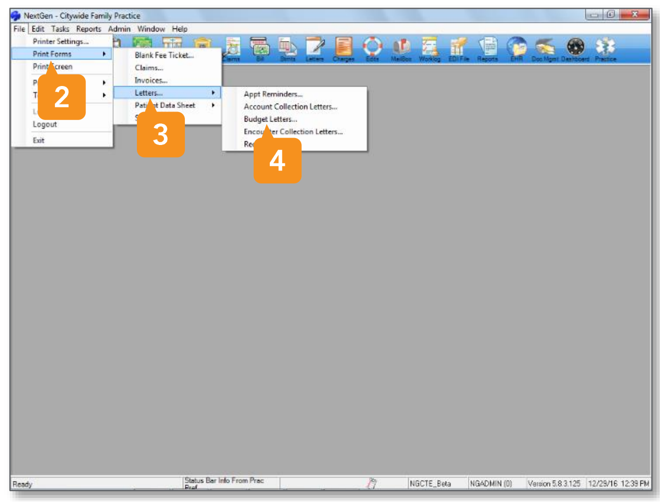


Running Budget Letters

1. To run budget letters in NextGen® Practice Management, click **File**.



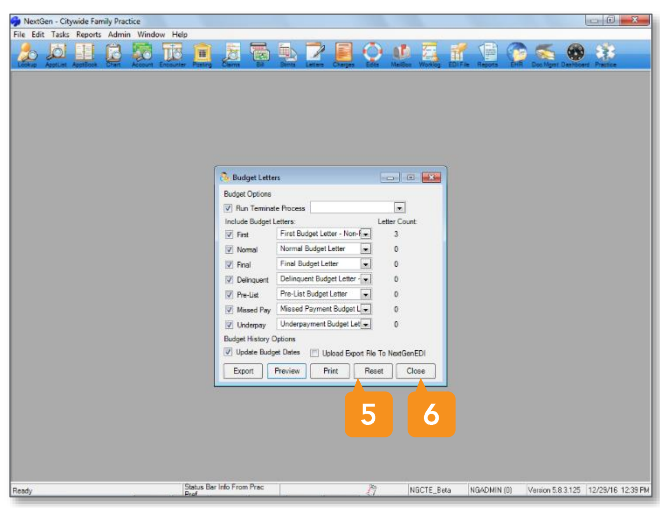
2. Click **Print Forms**.
3. Click **Letters**.
4. Click **Budget Letters**. The Budget Letters window opens.



5. Click **Print**

   — or —

   Click **Export**.
6. Click **Close**.

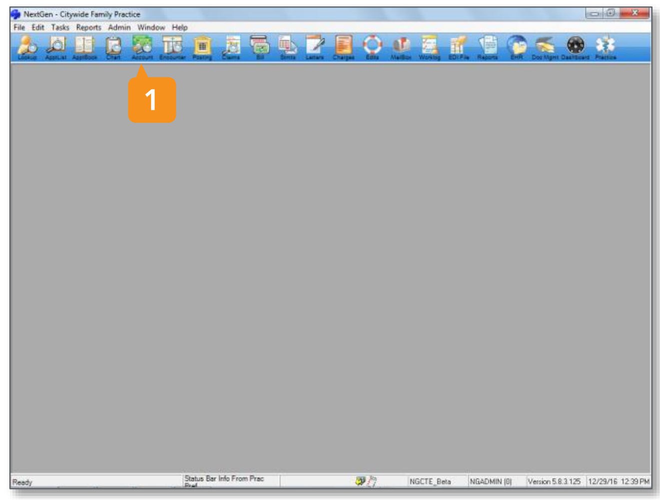


Posting Budget Payments

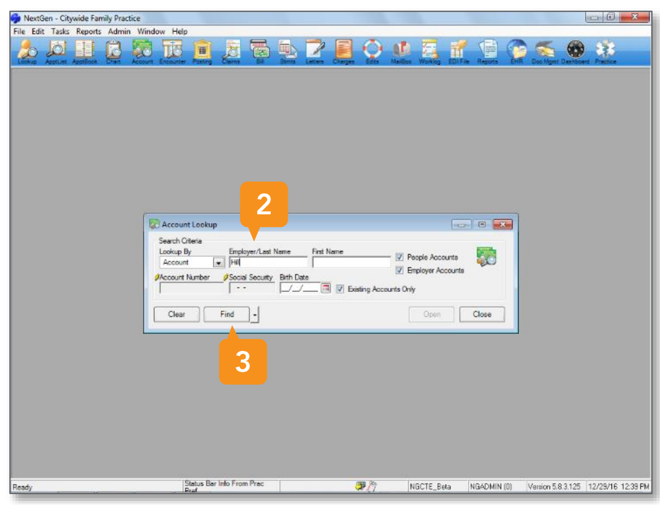
It is important that budget payments are posted correctly, since payments posted incorrectly can cause the budget to become delinquent. The most common error is when the payment is posted to the wrong source type. There are a few ways to help a user to know that the payment is for a budget. One way is to print the budget statements and letters on colored paper.

An alert can also be created on the Notes tab of the Account Profile to tell the user to post a payment to the Budget source type.

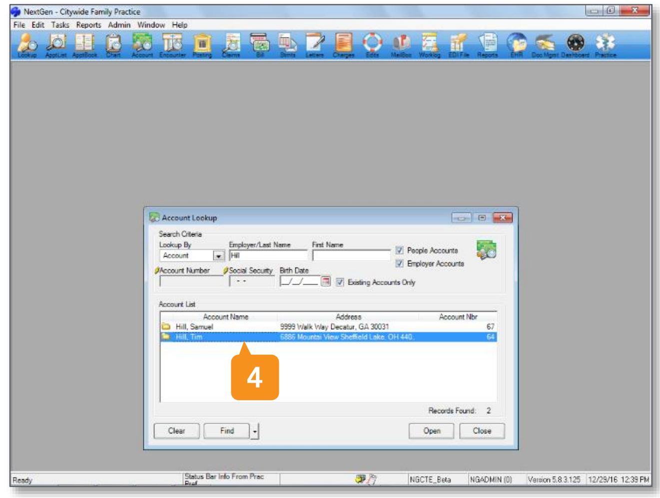
1. To create an alert in NextGen® Practice Management, click the **Accounts** icon. The Account Lookup window opens.



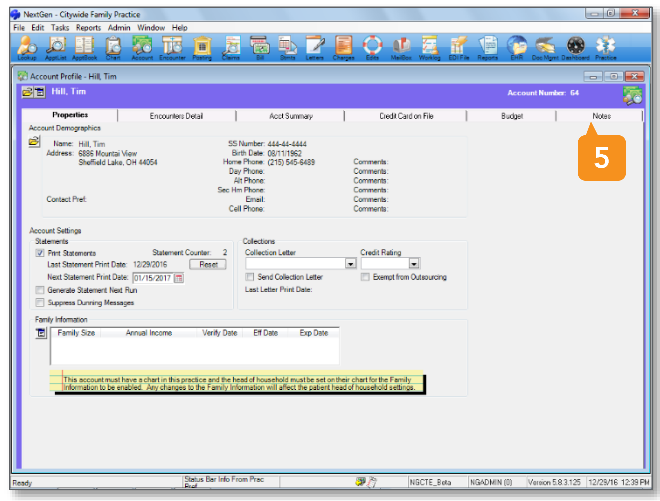
2. Enter the **search criteria.**
3. Click **Find**.



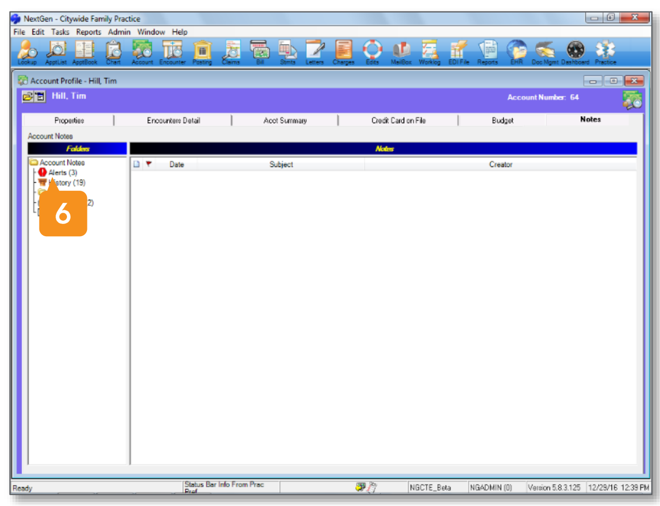
4. To open the account, double-click **it.**



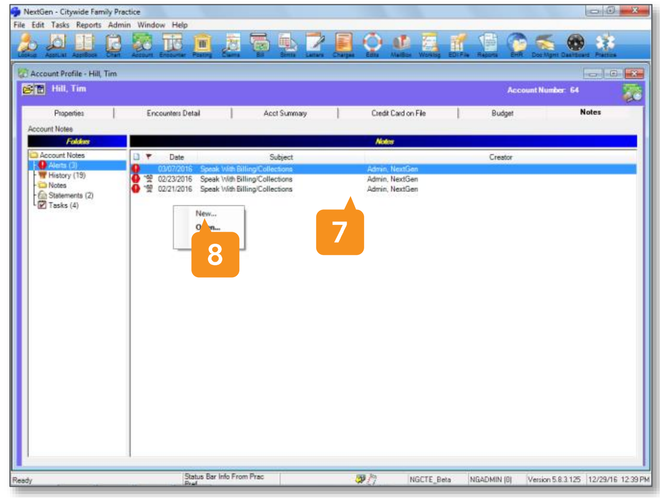
5. Click the **Notes tab**.



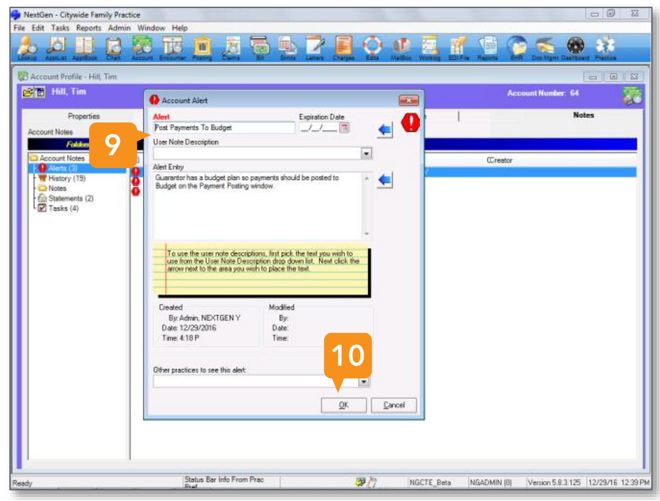
6. Click **Alerts**.



7. Right-click **anywhere in the right section of the window.**
8. Click **New**. The Account Alert window opens.



9. Complete the **required fields.**
10. Click **OK.**



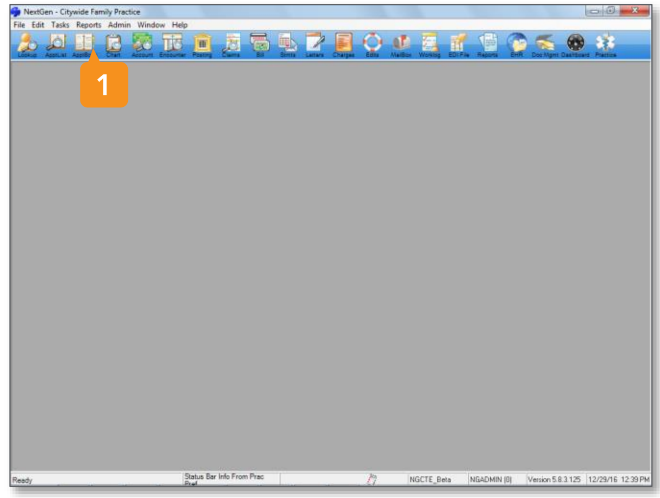
Monitoring Budgets with Tasks and Reports

Monitoring Budgets with Tasks

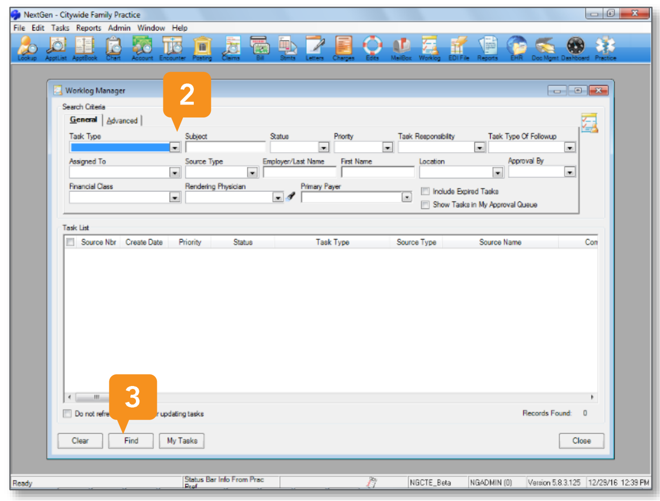
In the Budget Plan process, there are several budget-related tasks that can be set up under the Worklog Manager. The tasks are set up in Task Types System Master File. These tasks can include the following:

- Budget has become delinquent
- Budget has become prelisted
- Budget must be re-established - payment amount is now too low
- Budget payment missed

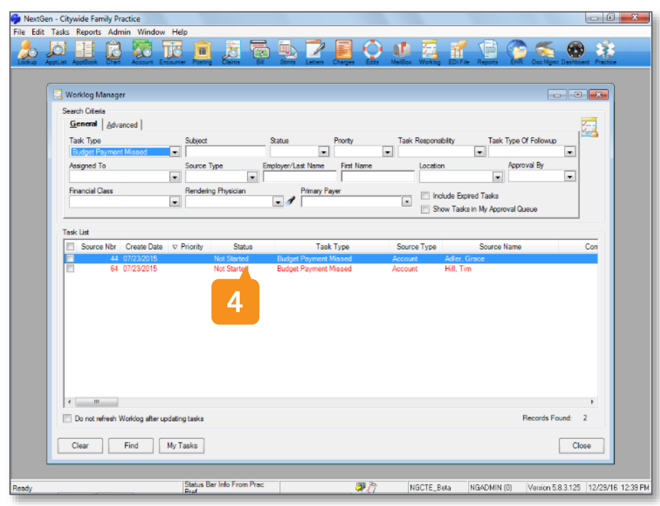
1. To work tasks in NextGen® Practice Management, click the **Worklog** icon. The Worklog Management window opens.



2. Enter the **search criteria**.
3. Click **Find.**

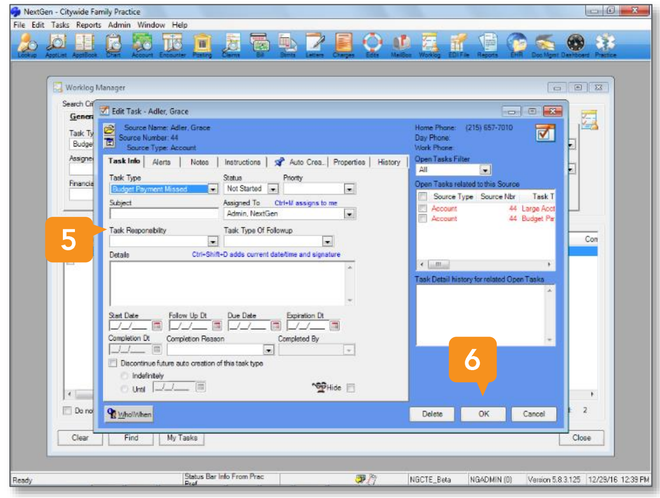


4. To open a task in the Task List, double-click **it**. The Edit Task window opens.



5. To track steps taken, update the **fields and status** as needed.

6. Click **OK**.



Monitoring Budgets with Reports

There are four **Accounts Receivable** reports to use to monitor budgets.

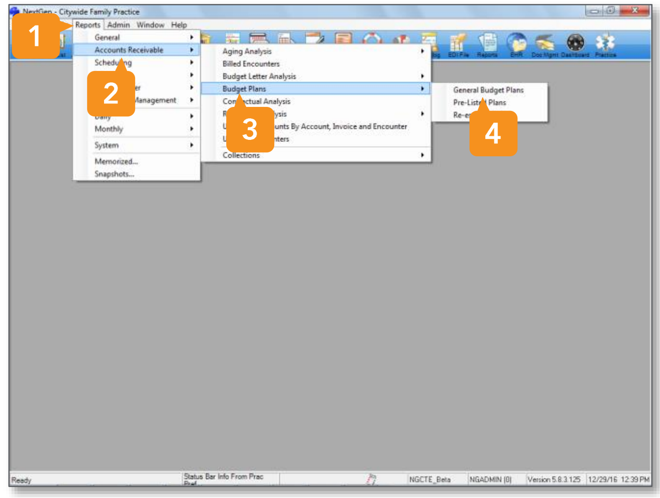
Budget Plans - General Budget Plans	This report lists all accounts with an active budget plan.
Budget Plans - Pre-Listed Plans	This report lists all accounts that are in a pre-list status and ready to turn over to collections.
Budget Plans - Re-establish Plans	This report lists all Perpetual budget accounts for which the payment amounts no longer meet the minimum percentage of the patient balance.
Collections - Account Summary	This report shows one summary line for every guarantor which can include budget information on the report. This report can also be used to view inactive plans.

1. To run the General Budget Plans report in NextGen® Practice Management, click **Reports**.

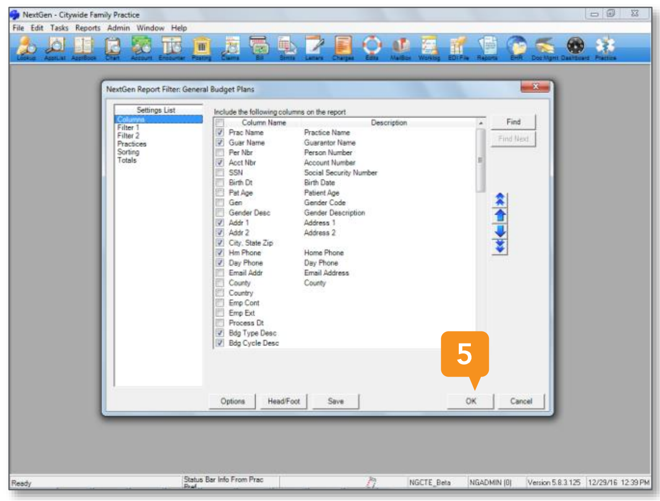
2. Click **Accounts Receivable**.

3. Click **Budget Plans**.

4. Click **General Budget Plans.** The Report Filter window opens.



5. Click **OK**. The General Budget Plans report opens.



6. Click **Exit**.