

# STRATFORD

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*stratford notes*

This month we would like to give a push to those people who are waiting to begin transmitting their claims. We have identified hundreds of our customers who still do not transmit their claims to Medicare. Medicare may begin requiring electronic transmission of claims even sooner than we have been telling you. If you have been listening to or watching the news you know there is probably going to be some type of national healthcare legislation this year. It will probably be focused on saving money. When one of the legislators learns that they can save billions of dollars without cutting benefits at all, they will probably enact mandatory EDI immediately. The issue will have bipartisan support. No one will be hurt. It is a win-win situation. All of Stratford's customers already have the necessary

software programs to transmit claims. All anyone may need to buy is a modem and possibly some communication software.

Aetna has the Medicare contract for 9 states. In a recent bulletin they announced that they would soon have electronic access to eligibility information. When this is available, only those practices that transmit using the National Standard Format (NSF) or the ANSI 837 format will have access. **All** Stratford customers have the software **now** for transmitting in the NSF **and** the ANSI 837 format. We have already coded the ANSI format which will be

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used to receive the eligibility information. This means that all Stratford customers in Aetna's states will have access as soon as the testing is completed.

Aetna also announced that in Arizona and Nevada (two of their nine states) they have a Bulletin board set up that you can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Public access is free; however, long-distance charges do apply. The bulletin board has a lot of useful information. It has an up to date list of UPIN numbers for all providers in Arizona and Nevada. If we find that there are a significant number of differences in their list and the one included with the Stratford program, we will make a conversion program available to update your files. •

Getting paid faster is the most important reason to transmit your claims, of course, but there are many other advantages. Besides, those practices that transmit claims are the leaders. They are the practices most likely to prosper.

***EDI may be mandatory sooner than we first thought. Congress is under more pressure than ever to lower costs.***

**Training Classes**  
**SHS Software Basic Training**

In the Stratford Classroom:

Every Friday 9:30 AM -12:00 PM \$95

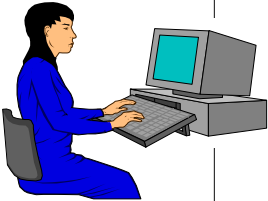
1:30 PM - 4:00 PM \$95

By Appointment \$95

Call for class availability at least three days in advance.  
On-site training with a certified Stratford trainer may be available (*by appointment only*). The cost is \$250.  
Telephone training is available (*by appointment only*).

### FROM THE EDI CORNER.....

We are trying to help some of our customers who have been setup for transmitting to a clearinghouse and are not transmitting. If you need help, please call. We would like to have at least 95% of our customers transmitting as many claims as possible this year.



Many insurance companies are “blanket no-card payers”. This means you do not need the group number if you bill electronically. Some recent additions to the list:

Blue Cross of California (Payer ID 47198), Centra Benefit Services (Payer ID 75243), Massachusetts Mutual (Payer ID 65935), Nationwide Insurance (Payer ID 31417), Wisconsin Education Association “WEA” Hospital, Medical and Dental (Payer ID 39151). You may use the default group number 999999.

If you have insurance editing enabled on your Stratford system, your form will be rejected prior to transmission if your patient’s insurance ID format is not correct for a specific insurance company. For example: Wellcare of New York (Payer ID 14164) requires the ID to be 11 numeric digits.

### INTERNET INFORMATION

**Q.** I know the Internet is a communication service. Where did it originate? Who owns it?

**A.** The Internet began as a project of the US Department of Defense 25 years ago called ARPAnet. This stands for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency Network. It was a network of computers that could survive a general nuclear war. At this time no one owns “it”. Rather than being a specific thing, it is a name given to a world-wide collection of connected computers.

If you want to become part of the internet, all you need is a computer and enough money. You must make your computer into an Internet Server. This means that anyone who has a connection to the Internet, anywhere in the world, can instantly gain access to your computer. They will be able to see any information on your computer that you make available. That’s right! Anyone in Russia, Tanzania, Brazil or Grand Junction Colorado can have access to your computer in your office 24 hours per day. Almost every country in the world has access now. Thousands of new connections are being made every month. This is not as magical as it may seem. If you have Procomm Plus, you can type [ALT+Q] and make your computer into a bulletin board. Anyone with a telephone line and a computer can access it. In fact, more people would have access to it than if it were connected to the Internet. The Internet is much less expensive. There are no long distance charges.

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) has an Internet server named: `accshost.nlm.nih.gov`. They operate the MEDLARS system, which contains more than 40 databases dealing with biomedical and environmental health information. MEDLINE is the primary database, with over seven million bibliographic records. You can call the NLM and request a “regular code”. Their number is 800-638-8480. Some searches are available to you at no charge on the Internet. A typical search costs \$2 or \$3. They have software to make the searches easier. •

## USER SURVEY

At this time Stratford has connections to all major on-line services like the Internet and CompuServe. Many of our dealers use it but very few of our customers use it. We are interested in finding ways for our users to communicate their needs to us. We would also like to develop a forum so that a user in Orlando, Florida could find out how a user in Los Angeles, California uses our software for a specific need. We are interested in installing a bulletin board which could be accessed by a regular phone call or through the Internet. Do you think you would use it? We want to expand our automated service capabilities since it is much less expensive than having person to person communication. At this time using on-line services is very difficult for most people. The new version of Microsoft Windows will make everything much easier and we believe most of our customers will be able to use it. We plan to have an account with the new Microsoft Network when it is available.

If you transmit your claims, you are using a type of on-line mail. We have just automated it so that you are not aware of how complex it is. We want to make user-to-Stratford and user-to-user communication that easy.

Stratford will run your office related classified ad in our monthly newsletter for *free*, upon SHS approval! Fax your ad to us at (415) 692-1073.

## COLORADO TAPE DRIVES

The most common tape backup drive used by our customers is the Colorado 125 and 250. Some of our customers have so much data that they need more than one tape to do a backup. There is now a longer tape from 3M: model 2120XL. This tape will transform your 250 MB tape drive into a 350 MB tape drive. Some people will need an updated version of the software.

Colorado also has a new Windows program



that will backup across a network very well. It has an improved user interface. •

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH WINDOWS 3.11

More of our customers are getting computers with faster processors and modems. Often the new computer has a very fast serial port for the modem. The serial port has something called a 16550 UART. This allows your modem to run very fast. We have recommended using our programs with Windows for Workgroups for more than one year. The problem is that Windows for Workgroups is not compatible with the high speed ports. Your computer will hang. The solution is a file named SERIAL.386. This file goes in the \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory.

Your hardware dealer can get this file for you. It can be downloaded from many bulletin boards.

**California Healthcare Management**  
 is running seminars in medical billing. The basic seminar for \$50 will be held Saturday, September 16 from 9am to 2pm. The advanced seminar for \$100 will be held Saturday, September 23 from 9am to 2pm.  
 To secure reservations, mail checks to:  
 CHM  
 2130 Palmetto Ave  
 Pacifica, CA 94044

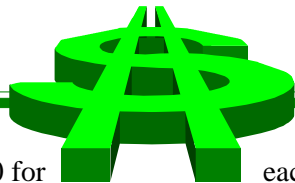
## 800 SUPPORT LINE NOTES

We have started receiving good feedback from our customers about the 800 number. Many of our East Coast clients have asked us about providing a service like this for our customers who are far from California. We could have offered the service a long time ago, but the cost was prohibitive. Now we have the volume of calls necessary to lower the price of the 800 service. As we

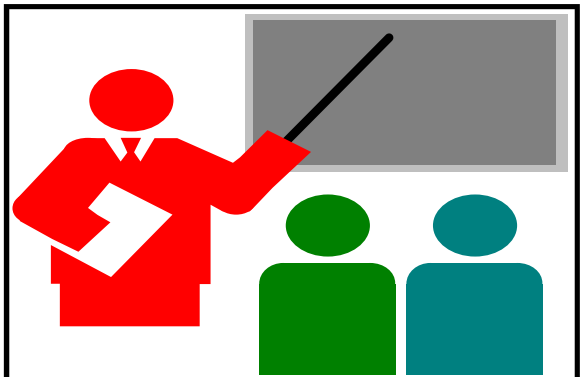
You can now reach Stratford by phone, fax, Internet, and Compuserve. If you have prepaid software maintenance, please use the 800 number to call directly to the support

get more customers in New York, Florida, Puerto Rico and other Eastern areas, we will begin offering more services. We have our Atlanta office almost ready to take calls now. When the volume of East coast calls reaches the required level, we plan to extend the hours to 8AM to 5PM EST. We are also planning to extend the hours for customers in Hawaii when their call volume reaches the necessary level.

According to one of our new customers the software is "too inexpensive". He just could not believe that he could get a complete package for his group for \$895.00. He was quoted more than \$12,000 by another vendor.



Stratford will pay you \$100 for each person\* you refer who purchases Stratford Software at full price (\$895). Simply fax or write to give us your referral. **We must receive the referral notice in advance of the sale. We cannot pay for a referral if you notify us after the sale.** \*Subject to



## ADVANCED TIP OF THE MONTH—MEDIFEST 95

Q. What is MediFest 95?

A. It is a 3 day conference of seminars, lectures, and exhibits of the latest information on Medicare Part B coding, guidelines, and billing practices. It is sponsored by Educational Services for Medicare, a service of Blue Shield of California.

Q. Is it open to everyone? How much does it cost? Where is it? When is it?

A. It is a national meeting, open to the public. It will be of interest to any provider who bills Medicare Part B. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency, 5 Embarcadero Center, San Francisco. The dates are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 27, 28, and 29. For more information call 415 445 5953. Stratford will be exhibiting software with Windows 95 and Windows NT 3.5 server.

### *Stratford Newsletter*

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*Stratford Healthcare Systems, Inc.*

*840 Mitten Road*

*Burlingame, CA 94010-1304*

*Phone (650) 692-7970*

*Fax (650) 692-1073*

*Prepaid Support Only (800) 274-4868*

*Internet mail@stratfordsoftware.com*

*http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/*

*New Software Sales Only (800) 274-4594*