

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Management Software

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stratford notes

All of us at Stratford have had our best year ever. We continue to grow faster than at any time in the past. We appreciate all of our customers, especially those who write with suggestions and comments.

Customers who have been with us for more than 10 years remember when we offered form printing and mailing services. We had large minicomputers then and we had the ability to take care of backups, etc for the customers. We stopped doing it because of the costs. Also, since all our customers had their own computer, they could do everything. Recently we have been getting more requests for printing, mailing and backup services. We are going to begin offering these services again. We can do it at a very low cost now by using new technology.

Stratford is a Microsoft "enterprise" developer. This gives us access to the information that Microsoft employees have. It also gives us access to the latest technology, before it is available at the retail stores.

We are now in the process of setting up a pilot program with about 50 customers. The customers will have a Microsoft Windows computer in their office. This

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computer will be connected to a phone line. A large computer located at Stratford will communicate with the customer's office. The customer's data will be backed up to the computer at Stratford. Stratford will begin the printing, mailing, and electronic claim process as soon as the backup is complete. Your statements could be at the post office the next morning. Your claims may be transmitted before you arrive at the office. We will be able to update your programs without sending diskettes to you.

All the data on the Stratford computer will be copied to tape and will be available for years.

This service will be available 7 days a week. You will not be required to do any printing or backups anymore. If you are interested, please send

You can find Stratford's Internet server at this address:

Training Classes
SHS Software Basic Training

In the Stratford Classroom:

Every Friday	9:30 AM -12:00 PM	\$165
	1:30 PM - 4:00 PM	\$165
By Appointment		\$165

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*).

NEW STATEMENT FORMAT

You no doubt have noticed that our statement format has changed. This is the format that will be offered to customers who subscribe to our new full-service. Some variation in the layout is available. All statements will be 8 1/2 by 11 inches. You can get 4 pages and a return envelope for 32 cents postage. This format is only available on high-speed, duplex, multicolor laser printing presses. The equipment requires full time trained personnel to keep it running properly. By transmitting your print files to Stratford, it is very inexpensive. Most offices will find that the labor savings will easily cover the cost. Also, you will not need to stock the forms anymore.

If you are interested in more information, please send a fax to (415) 692 1073. •

WIN95 INSTALLATION

Last month we asked for those people with Windows 95 to let us know by fax: 415 692 1073. Not very many people did this. We want to know because we have a

special installer designed for Window 95 that makes loading updates much easier. Our new installer works well with Windows NT but there are a few installation items that it does not do. If you are using or you anticipate using Windows NT as a workstation, please let us know. We will create a new installer just for the NT people when the need justifies the resources. If you use NT as a dedicated server our present program works well and you do not need a special installation program. •

SCHEDULING PROGRAMS

Do you have a scheduling program that you like? We are receiving more and more requests for various changes to our scheduling program. The problem with most of the suggestions that we have received is that the requested changes would have the effect of customizing the program for one provider or group of providers. We can only make changes that will work for most of our customers and continue to sell and support the program at the present price. •

ICD-9-CM/CPT UPDATE

Stratford has a utility program available that will automatically load ICD and CPT codes automatically. The program works with the codes that are distributed by the AMA on floppy disk. It will probably work with codes from other sources. If you are not sure, we can help you. Just send a fax with the source and we will research it for you. •

EDI "per-claim" charges

Stratford does not have any "per-claim" or other charges related to transmitting claims to Medicare or any other carrier. We only charge (optional) for supporting

NPI/NPS UPDATE

Earlier this year we printed an article about the upcoming NPI/NPS (National Provider Identifier System). At that time we had been told that this new system may be a requirement as early as January 1, 1997. Now we have a new schedule as follows:

- 02/21/97 Notice of proposed Rulemaking published in *Federal Register*.
- 06/01/97 Production load of the NPS database
- 07/02/97 Final Regulation published in *Federal Register*
- 08/01/97 NPIs issued to Medicare providers
- 12/01/97 Use of NPIs for Medicare claims

Since we have already coded as much as we can into the Stratford program, we should have no problem meeting the requirements. •

INCORRECT HIC NUMBERS

One of the most common causes for a Medicare claim to be rejected is an incorrect or invalid health insurance claim (HIC) number. There are usually missing digits or an incorrect suffix. This results in delays or even overpayments which are costly for both the physician and the Medicare carrier.

The Stratford program has a feature which will help avoid this error. If you enter the patient's Social Security number in the patient information screen, the program will format it so it is easy to see if your entry is correct. Then, when you enter the

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subscriber ID number in the insurance information screen, use the “dot” default mechanism to enter the patient's social security number with the correct suffix. For example if the patient's social security number is 987654321 and the patient's ID number is 987654321A, you could enter the ID by simply entering .A (“dot” A).

The “dot” default mechanism works in all Stratford programs to help you enter the correct data. Another example of its use is to enter the date on the transaction line. If you are entering a large number of charges for a specific date, set the “system” date to that date. Then on the transaction simply enter . (“dot”) when the program asks for the date. This will save you many keystrokes.

The “dot” default mechanism will also do calculations for you. If you are entering a recall date and you want a date six months from now, simply enter .6 The program will calculate a date 6 months from now. •

SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

Priority support service: The fastest way to get support is by fax. It is possible for us to receive more than 100 calls within the first 15 minutes after we open in the morning. It is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take every call without charging much more than we now do.

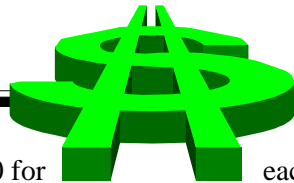
If you send a fax with a description of the problem, your call is given priority over other calls.

If you call and leave the message "please call", this is a prescription for "phone tag". Your call is placed at the bottom of the call-back list. We must do everything possible so that we may help the maximum number of people in the minimum amount of time.

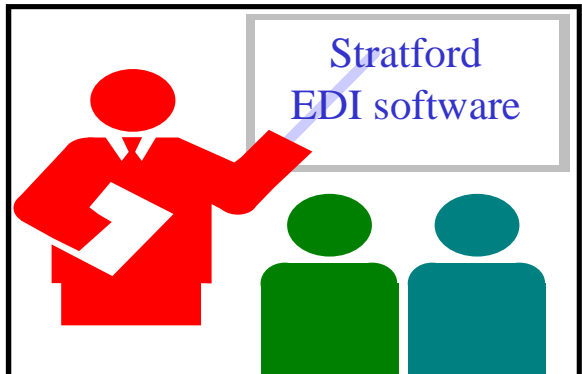
Do not call more than one time. The second call places your first call at the bottom of the call back list.

At this time we can deliver support by email. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. The reason is that we get very few support email messages. We only check the email one to three times each day. As the volume increases, we will put more resources into email.

We are interested in hearing from people who would like to receive support by email. •



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

Do you use charges with a zero amount? Some of our customers use a charge as a memo. The problem with this is that the software tries to print all charges on paper and/or transmit them. Payers will not accept a charge with a zero amount. The Stratford program knows this and is programmed to hold these charges and give you an audit. If you use this type of charge alot, you may have an audit that is very large.

Our software has printing and non-printing memos that you may use for this purpose.

If you are sure that you want to use a charge, you should set up a special automatic transaction. When you are creating the automatic charge, type "NO" in the box labeled "print on

Stratford Newsletter

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