

STRATFORD

Volume 21.09

Healthcare EDI and Management Software

September 1997

I shall cover several issues that have caused quite a few support calls for us recently.

stratford notes On October 1, NHIC (Medicare) will implement a HCFA requirement that the provider change the EDI password every 30 days in order to transmit claims. Not every provider will be affected by this change on October 1. The requirement will be phased in.

If you now transmit claims to NHIC, Stratford will have an update that will allow you to change your password. The Stratford program will have an EDI maintenance window similar to the way you can change other information in your data files.

For those customers who have PC Plus 32 (this is the latest version that is for Windows 95) we believe that we can develop a script that will allow the password change to be automated. Please do not rush out and buy this program until we see what is required. NHIC will have a test bulletin board working after September 1. We should be able to have the changes ready by the middle of September.

If you transmit claims to NHIC, please check your statement. There should be a transaction line that says "ECS ANSI NHIC MEDICARE". If our database is coded that way for you, you will automatically receive the update. If you do not see this transaction and you believe

inside this issue

- *Stratford Notes*
- ▷ *NHIC Passwords*
- ▷ *Stratford is compatible with Win98*
- ▷ *Stratford is "year 2000" ready*
- *From the EDI Corner...*
- *CABBS passwords*
- *HCFA 1500 Will Change*
- *Stratford Signs Contract With EDS*
- *Software Support Notes*
- *National Correct Coding Policy Manual*
- *Diagnosis Codes on Laboratory Orders*
- *Telemedicine*
- *Software Support Notes*
- *Internet Resources*

Stratford has nearly 3,300 licensed users

that you need the update, please send a fax to (650) 692 1073. Note that our new area code is 650.

We continue to receive requests about "the millennium" or "will the Stratford program work after the year 2000". The answer is **yes**. We have tested dates up to the year 9999 so we are prepared for the future.

The Stratford program is fully compatible with Microsoft's "Windows 98" beta 2. If you buy a computer with it, let us know. We will have a "walkthru" like we did for Windows 95. •

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*).

FROM THE EDI CORNER.....

The NHIC Password questions are covered on the first page and in other places in this newsletter.

Stratford is approved for production in Wisconsin for Medicare UB92 claims using the ANSI 837 format.

More people are getting the 32-bit version of PC Plus. Your EDI setup will need to have several changes. If you are planning to get this version, please let us know **before** you install it. We do not have the changes made for all payers yet. We plan to make the changes as our customers request them. If you install the new version without the necessary changes in your EDI setup, your transmission will stop working. Please allow as much time as possible for this change. •

CABBS PASSWORDS

We have had many customers inquire about the password requirement for transmitting to NHIC using CABBS. Providers will be required to change their passwords monthly beginning October 1, 1997. NHIC plans to have a test bulletin board setup so we can test our program

beginning in September 1997. We should be able to make the necessary changes and get them to the affected customers so there won't be any downtime. We have been told that this requirement will be phased in so not all providers will be required to change their password beginning October 1, 1997 (refer to your July newsletter from NHIC). •

HCFA 1500 WILL CHANGE

The Health Care Financing Administration has released new print file specifications for the HCFA-1500 paper claim form. All the claim blocks, which contain dates, have been updated to accommodate a four-digit year. •

STRATFORD SIGNS CONTRACT WITH EDS

Stratford has signed a contract with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) of Plano Texas to provide software for providers who transmit healthcare claims. This contract covers all companies owned by EDS including NHIC. NHIC is the Medicare contractor for Northern California, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Main. NHIC also processes claims for Texas Medicaid. EDS is one of the world's largest health claim processing service companies. This contract will make Stratford software potentially available to all providers who transmit to any payer that contracts with EDS. •

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 you while you are using the Stratford software.

NATIONAL CORRECT CODING POLICY MANUAL

We had an article regarding this manual in the past. Some people had a problem finding a place to order a copy.

To order HCFA's National Correct Coding Policy Manual for Part B Medicare Carriers by mail, you can call the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) sales desk: (703) 487 4650.

If you want a paper copy, use order #PB97-957602LOV (\$65 plus shipping).

If you want a CD ROM copy, use order #PB97-594071LOV (\$88 plus shipping)

You may also order individual chapters of the Correct Coding manual.

This manual changes significantly every quarter, so an old manual may not be useful. The next version is 3.3 (tentatively available 9/1/97). •

DIAGNOSIS CODES ON LABORATORY ORDERS

Some Medicare contractors require laboratories to submit a diagnosis code with their claim. The only way for the laboratory to get this information is from the ordering provider. Payment may be denied without a diagnosis to substantiate the medical necessity of the service. •

Stratford will run your Stratford software related classified ad in our monthly newsletter *free*, upon SHS approval!



TELEMEDICINE

The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) requires that medical consultations be conducted face-to-face for providers to be reimbursed for the care they render.

An exception to this rule involves providers who have a risk contract with Medicare. These contracts pay providers lump sums per patient. These contracts do not pay for specific services. It is possible for a provider to use Telemedicine for such patients and still get his/her regular payments per patient.

Some private payers are now paying for interactive video-conferencing consultations.

Most insurers, including Medicare, pay radiologists for interpreting an image sent electronically instead of film.

Most payers will not pay for the costs of digitizing, storing and sending data. •

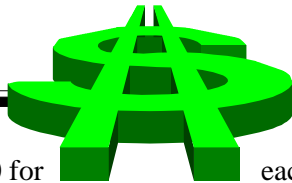
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

1. **Faxed requests for support get Priority Service.**
2. **If you send a fax with a description of the problem, your call is given priority over other faxes.**
3. **Do not call more than one time. The second call places your first call at the bottom of our callback list.**

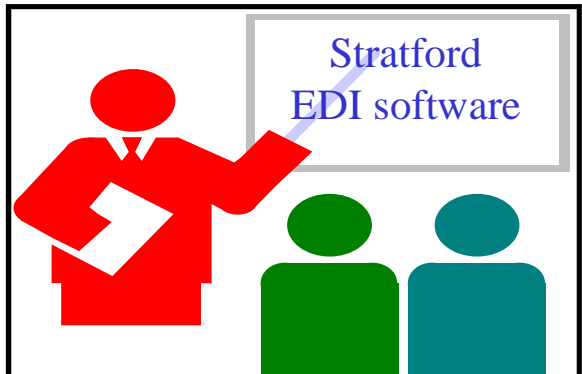
We can receive hundreds of calls in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we can to avoid "phone-tag" so that we may help the maximum number of people in the minimum amount of time.

At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than the fax. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or 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



INTERNET RESOURCES

If you haven't visited our web site for awhile, you should check it out at:
<http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/>

We have been keeping the latest updates there. It is not accessible unless you email and ask for it. You will receive a reply to your email that has the exact address and file name. You can use your browser to download the self-exploding file.

We have also been keeping the latest version of our manual there. The manual is in Microsoft Word 7 format, so you will need that program to look at it or print it. Again, to get the manual, you must email to us and ask for it. We will reply to your email with the address. •

Stratford Newsletter

Copyright 1997, all rights reserved

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