

STRATFORD

Volume 21.10

Healthcare EDI and Management Software

October 1997

We have more this month on the password requirement by NHIC Medicare. This is a HCFA requirement. The requirement to change your password will begin October 1, 1997.

Specifically, the requirement is to change your password every 30 days. This means that the first time any providers will receive the notice to change the password will be approximately October 30, 1997. NHIC will be phasing the notices in over time, so not all providers will be required to change the password on October 30, 1997.

We will be sending out a few test updates to our clients who have had little or no problems loading updates in the past. After we see what, if any problems are encountered, we will update the rest of our clients. Some people cannot follow printed instructions and so they always call to have someone read along with them. For this reason, we expect a large number of additional calls in the months of October and November. Please keep this in mind when you call for support.

We will only update those customers who have been subscribing to our software maintenance program continuously. The clients who sign up for an update only will be the last to be updated because their diskettes cannot be created automatically.

If you have upgraded your computer to Windows 95 or Windows NT, please let

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Stratford has nearly 3,300 licensed users

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

us know. We have a special diskette available that will make the installation much easier for you. We also would like to know the version of PC PLUS that you are using.

If you are "computer literate", you have Windows 95 and you have Internet access, you are eligible to download your update from our Internet server. The file is approximately 5 megabytes so it will take 30 minutes or more to download at 28,800 BAUD.

If you would like to get your update this way, you must send an email to: upgrade@stratfordsoftware.com.

Also, for more information please see the "news" page at our Internet site: <http://www.stratfordsoftware.com>

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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 Texas clearinghouse "THIN" has approved Stratford software for transmission of claims. The payers available through THIN include NHIC for Texas Medicaid. •

WPS (Wisconsin Medicare) has an option to automatically logoff when the transmission finishes. This option should never be used with a script (such as the scripts available from Stratford). The script must have a "PAUSE" statement to allow time for the WPS system to read the transmission file before logoff occurs. Use of the option without pausing to wait for the "DONE" message, meaning that your file has been copied and read will result in the complete loss of your data. •

SUPPLY ORDERS

Due to popular request we will begin sending an order form with the statement. As you know, we cannot accept oral or hand-written orders. We must have all orders on our standard order sheet so it can be processed with fewer errors. This will save many of you the trouble of calling or faxing a request for an order form. You should always make a copy of the order form and keep the original in the

event you have a second order before you receive another statement from Stratford.

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WINDOWS '98

Microsoft has not yet released the final version of Windows '98. Only the 'beta 2' version is available as of today. We are not recommending that you use this 'beta' version for production work. In other words, you should not use it with the Stratford program for production billing. You may, of course use it to test for compatibility. We are very interested in any problems that you may have. Stratford will not necessarily be able to help you recover any lost data due to your use of any 'beta' software.

We have tested Windows '98 'beta 2' in-house and we have found no problems. We believe that the Stratford program is 100% compatible, but of course, we cannot guarantee it until the final version is released. •

**FLOPPY DISK
'TRANSMISSION'**

NHIC New England has many providers who still copy a National Standard Formatted transmission file onto floppy diskette and mail it in to be processed. Stratford has a custom version available for this purpose. The Stratford program will automatically prompt for a blank formatted floppy diskette after creating the transmission file. When you press [ENTER] the file will be automatically copied to the floppy diskette. •

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

MICROSOFT “BASECAMP”

Microsoft has a new product, code-named *Basecamp*, which will allow secure network connections through untrusted networks such as the Internet.

This product will allow a company (a clinic or doctor’s office) to build a virtual private network (VPNs), where all the data is transmitted in an encrypted form, over the Internet. This product will support Point-to-Point Tunneling protocol (PPTP), as well as RADIUS, and CHAP authentication mechanisms.

That’s nice. How does that relate to Stratford’s customers?

Stratford has clinics and groups of providers who have satellite offices. Now those satellite offices generally must have a leased telephone line to communicate with the central office database. In some cases, this may be more expensive than using an Internet connection. If a provider had an office in San Francisco and New York City, the Internet would be far less expensive.

Stratford has many billing services that would like to allow their individual provider customers to access the data that is presently on the billing service computer. Often the customer is hundreds of miles away. The Internet would be a very inexpensive way to allow this.

If you are a technical person you know that this is possible now. Why do we need the new Microsoft product? The reason is the security. As soon as you open up your

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



computer to the Internet, it is possible for someone in a distant country to have access to your data. If you are a psychiatrist (or any specialty), you don’t want an unknown person to have any access at all to your confidential patient information. There would be a significant civil liability if you allowed the information to be made public.

The other obvious use for this product would be to transmit claims electronically over the Internet. Stratford is not aware of even one clearinghouse or payer that has an open Internet connection that a provider can transmit claims into. There are some pilot programs and some special contracted arrangements now, but nothing that is available to all providers.

We have had previous newsletter articles regarding privacy issues and the use of “SET”. “SET” is a standard for encryption that is supported by Mastercard, Visa, Microsoft and many others. The Microsoft *Basecamp* product is a way to incorporate the “SET” encryption standard into a practical application. •

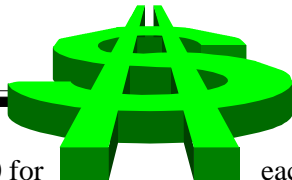
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

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.**

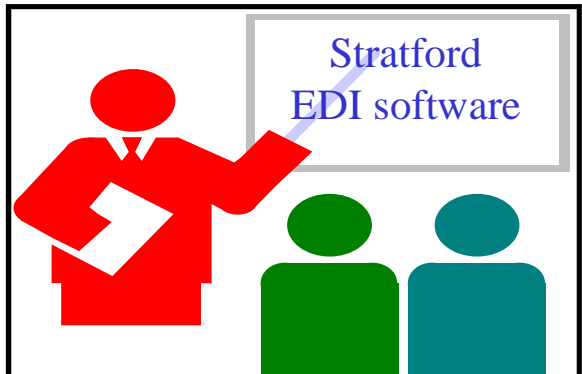
We can receive hundreds of calls in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we can 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

We are now supplying several payers and large providers and billing services with updates from our Internet server. We have created special directories with all the necessary programs and documentation for each user that is eligible for this service.

This service is now offered at no additional charge (as long as you are able to do the download and installation without calling for support).

As you can imagine, this allows us to make an update available to you in minutes instead of days. You must have an Internet email address on file with us so we can notify you of the file location and provide instructions. As we get more clients using this service, we will eventually make the updates automatic. •

Stratford Newsletter

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