

# STRATFORD

Volume 22.01

Healthcare EDI and Management Software

January 1998

This is our 22nd year. We will be upgrading our program and services extensively this year.

## *stratford notes*

Before the year 2000 we will have our program designed exclusively for Windows, either Win95/98 or WinNT. We estimate that approximately 50% of our customers are running the present program under a version of Windows, so the upgrade will be easy for them. We will continue to support the current program for those customers who do not have Windows.

As a first step to releasing our new program, we will post “screen shots” and possibly a working program on our Internet web site. We have several customers who now download updates and other files from our web site. Those customers will be the first to see and possibly try out the new program. If you are interested, please send an email to: [newprgs@stratfordsoftware.com](mailto:newprgs@stratfordsoftware.com)

The new program will work with either “free tables” like the present program or with Microsoft SQL.

The new program will have a printer setup capability similar to Microsoft Word and other Windows programs.

The new program will have “right click” access to functions related to the user’s present activity.

The new program will require the use of a mouse to fully utilize all of its features.

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Stratford has more than 3,300 licensed users

The changes that were put into place for Medicare (beginning on October 1, 1997) are now in use by hundreds of customers with very few problems. When the Medicare computer asks for a new password, the Stratford program supplies it and keeps it for future use. The Medicare computer must save the new password and make it permanent for all future calls. This process can take a long time. Some of our customers thought there was a problem because of the long wait, so they typed in something. The Medicare computer accepted this as their new password. The Stratford program was not aware of the user-supplied password so the user was inadvertently prevented from getting back into the Medicare computer.

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 also available (*by appointment*)

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

WPS (Wisconsin Medicare contractor) has announced that they will soon begin accepting provider claims via the Internet.

They will utilize "WWW" instead of "FTP" for sending the claims. This means you will need to use a browser (Netscape 3.0 or above, or Internet Explorer 4.0 or above) to send the claims. WPS will also have a Message Board that contains the same EDI reports that are currently available on the WPS Bulletin Board System.

This means that it may not be possible to automate the EDI transmission with a script. We will let you know more on this later. •

### HCFA EDI FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

We have received more notices regarding the requirements for transmitting in ANSI formats beginning within two years. All Stratford customers who first transmitted claims after 1994 have been setup using the ANSI format whenever possible. For all our customers who started before 1994 and are still using the National Standard

Format, we will make an automatic converter available in the near future. We plan to convert all the Medicare submitters as soon as possible. We will then convert the clearinghouse submitters as soon as we are certain that all the claims will be processed correctly.

Please let us know if a payer sends you a notice regarding your format. If you now transmit to a payer that wants to begin receiving the ANSI formats, we will give it priority. •

### PARTICIPATING OR NON-PARTICIPATING

It is time for Medicare providers to choose whether to participate in the Medicare program for 1998. Here are some reasons to "participate". Not all may be offered in all states.

- ◆ Claim filing advantages: a toll free number for electronic transmissions.
- ◆ Higher payment rates: Medicare Part B pays five percent more than it pays to non-participating providers.
- ◆ Access to patient eligibility data
- ◆ Automatic Medigap claim filing: eliminate the need to submit separate claims.
- ◆ Inclusion in participating provider directory

A group only needs to sign one agreement. All members of the group are bound by that one agreement.

A non-participating provider who "accepts assignment" on a claim is paid at the lower, non-participating rate. •

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#### 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

## UPIN NUMBERS

We have received the latest release of UPIN numbers from the federal government.

The Stratford program includes a sample from the UPIN file now, since the total file is much too large. We can extract a portion of this file based on zip code. If you would like a new UPIN lookup file, you may receive it by faxing the zip code range you want. Although we do not charge for the codes, there may be a charge for creating the file and compressing it to floppy diskettes. The file can also be downloaded from our web site and avoid the shipping charges. By downloading the file from our web site, you can access the data immediately. •

## STRATFORD EAST COAST EXPANSION

Stratford has had customers on the East Coast since the early 1980's. In 1997 we expanded our customer base there by several hundred new users. This number should exceed 1,500 in the first quarter of 1998.

The Stratford program has been fully compliant with Medicare contractor's requirements on the East Coast for more than 10 years, so no additional development work is necessary. •

## EDI TRANSMISSION SCRIPTS

At the present time, we supply more than 50 files for some payers in order to enable our customers to use any EDI format and

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Stratford will run your Stratford software related classified ad in our monthly newsletter *free*, upon SHS approval!  
Fax your ad to us at (650) 692-1073.



any version of ProComm Plus. We have recently completely re-written many of the scripts so that only 7 files are required.

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## A CASE OF INSURANCE FRAUD

A Wisconsin psychiatrist has to make restitution in the amount of \$2.4 million. The physician persuaded a patient that she suffered from multiple personality disorder and then billed her insurance carrier for group psychotherapy for the 126 separate personalities. •

## SANCTIONED PROVIDERS ON THE INTERNET

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) keeps public records of individuals/entities that are excluded from reimbursement under Medicare (Title XVIII of the Social Security Act). This information is available on the Internet. The Internet address is:

<http://www.arnet.gov/epls/> for the list of debarred, excluded, and suspended providers and entities. The website will be updated daily. •

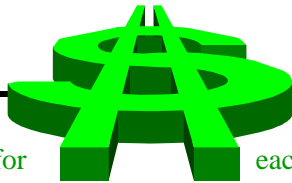
## SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 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 many 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". Hand-written faxes can be almost impossible to read, so please type them whenever possible.

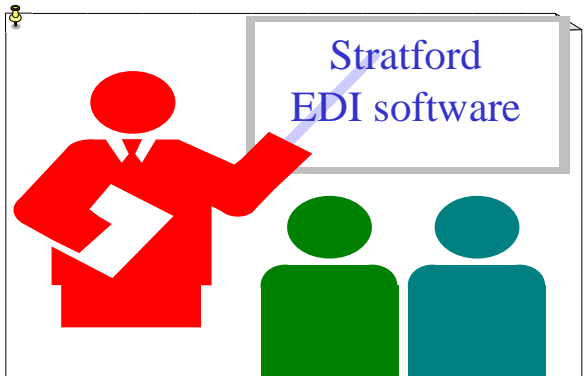
At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or three times each day. As the volume increases, we will put more resources into email.

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



Stratford you \$100 for you refer who 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 restrictions



## INTERNET RESOURCES

Here is our latest recommendation for web sites to visit.

This web site has links to many popular healthcare related web sites:

<http://www.aspenpub.com/new/internet/health.htm>

This web page is organized like a table of contents to healthcare related web sites.

There is a link near the bottom of the page that will allow you to access a "shopping mall" for medical devices, books and other healthcare related products. •

### *Stratford Newsletter*

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