

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Management Software

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stratford notes This month we are going to discuss some directions we can take with our new “Windows only” product.

This new product has been in development for some time and is taking shape in a near-final form at this time.

We are unsure about the Y2K liability involved with releasing a new product at this time, so we are only saying that we hope to have the product in some beta sites this summer. Whether or not we will release it as a public/final product this year depends on the outstanding litigation involving Y2K issues. At this time it looks like there will be “millions” of law suits so it is not a very good time to release a new product. Our present product was fully tested more than two years ago by EDS and several Medicare contractors. Our present product passed some additional rigorous testing in January of this year. We are certain that neither our customers or our company will have any Y2K liability issues with the present product.

Now on to some questions about features needed or desired in the new product. If you have been reading our newsletter each month, you know that the new product is designed as a client/server application. Another way of describing it is “nTier”. Specifically it will be designed to be what Microsoft calls a “com” object. These are general design characteristics and do not really say much about what the customer will see on the display or how it will

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Stratford has more than 3,800 licensed users

work.

There will be several possibilities for the user interface. The obvious one is similar to the present interface but prettier. We believe it will be the most popular for all existing customers.

Another type of interface that we can develop is one that runs on a web browser. Because of the nature of the technology at this time, this interface will not be as quick/responsive. This interface will resemble what you can see when you browse the Internet. The performance will depend on how much you spend on hardware. This interface has an added advantage that it can grow to any size organization. It can be accessed anywhere in the world. A variation of this would be Windows “CE” compatible screens. Windows “CE” is a version of Microsoft Windows that is common on the present generation of handheld computers. •

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 \$225

1:30 PM - 4:00 PM \$225

By Appointment \$225

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

Stratford has been approved for Railroad Medicare in the NSF format. If you wish to transmit to Railroad Medicare you can contact Stratford to receive the necessary forms and materials.

Stratford has now been approved for UB92 transmission directly to Blue Cross of California. You can contact Stratford directly to receive information about setting up for claims transmission.

Stratford is approved for transmission in the ANSI format to Indiana Administar for Medicare and BC/BS. •

STRATFORD INTERNET WEB SITE

Our web site has been in place since 1993. We are continually redesigning/expanding our Internet web site. We now have more than 375 separate pages. We also have a new server with 16 gigabytes of storage available, so we will be putting many other materials “on the web” during the coming months.

Recently we placed many new documents

on the “download” page. These documents are in Microsoft Word format. If you do not have Microsoft Word, you can download a free viewer from www.microsoft.com.

Some of the documents now available include forms for new customers: order forms, practice registration, etc. Also we have the document necessary to have your monthly bill paid automatically by credit card.

Soon we will have all the sign-up materials for those payers and clearinghouses that want us to do the registration. Examples are NEIC and Blue Cross of California and Delta Dental.

If there is a demand for it, we could put a UPIN number lookup that includes all providers in the United States. •

MICROSOFT WINDOWS NT NEWS

Microsoft has announced that there are now 28 million licensed users of Microsoft Windows NT workstation worldwide.

Steve Ballmer, president of Microsoft announced that the company will regroup into 4 divisions.

There will be: 1. an operating system 2. Office & BackOffice Office 3. development tools 4. Entertainment software. •

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 providing software support.

MEDICARE BENEFICIARY RIGHT TO AN ITEMIZED STATEMENT

We recently received the following information that we thought we would pass on to our customers. None of the words below come from Stratford. The Stratford program should be able to meet all these requirements for all specialties. You have the ability to "demand" a statement on a Medicare account.

Section 4311 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 gives beneficiaries the right to submit a written request for an itemized statement from their provider or supplier for any Medicare item or service. The law also requires providers or suppliers to furnish the itemized statement within 30 days of the request or they can be subject to a civil monetary penalty of up to \$100 for each failure.

Soon (on or before July 1, 1999) your patients will receive this notice with their EOMBs and MSNs:

"You have the right to request an itemized statement which details each Medicare item or service which you have received from your physician, hospital, or any other health supplier or health professional. Please contact them directly if you would like an itemized statement."

Included below are suggestions regarding the types of information that might be helpful for the beneficiary to receive on an itemized statement. We hope this information will enable the beneficiary to reconcile the itemized statement with the

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.



Medicare notice. These are recommendations only. Since most providers/suppliers have established an itemized billing system for internal accounting procedures and billing of other payers, the furnishing of an itemized statement should not pose a significant additional burden. However, some providers/suppliers may not regularly create or furnish hardcopy itemized statements and may wish to reexamine their internal billing and tracking process to ensure that it has the capability to comply with this new requirement.

Providers/suppliers should not charge beneficiaries for the itemized statement.

The statement should also include a name and a telephone number for the beneficiary to call if there are further questions.

After receiving an itemized statement, beneficiaries may attempt to reconcile it with the MSN or EOMB. In situations where there are questions, especially involving some services and payment methods, providers/suppliers are requested to assist beneficiaries in

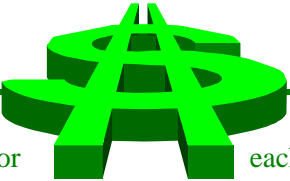
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 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.**

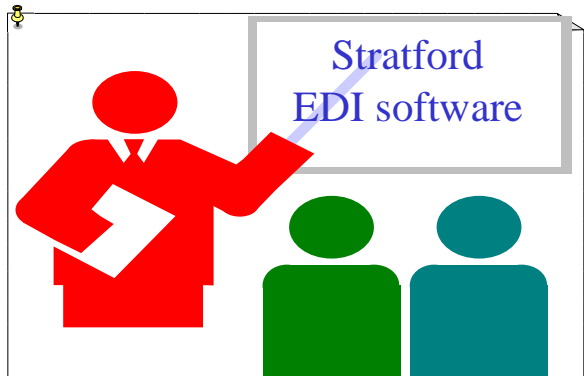
We can receive many calls in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we can to avoid "phone-tag". Hand-written faxes can be almost impossible to read, so please type them whenever possible. Include the best time to call you.

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  will pay you \$100 for you refer who each person* 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 restrictions



INTERNET RESOURCES

Subject: medical news lists.

There are many lists now that may be of interest to our customers. One of the best (we think) is PARTB-L. You can ask anything regarding billing. To find out more:

send "INFO REFCARD" as a message to: LISTSERV@LIST.IEX.NET.

Medical-Legal topics are discussed in the health-lawyers news list. You can subscribe and/or get more information at this web site:

<http://www.healthlawyers.org>

Stratford Newsletter

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