

STRATFORD

Volume 24.06

Healthcare EDI and Practice Management Software

June 2000

stratford notes

This month's newsletter will concentrate on our new 'windows-only' program and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

The target date for implementing the HIPAA changes hasn't been determined yet, but will probably happen in 2002. That seems like a long time in the future, but it really is only about 18 months. We believe that we have already coded all the changes necessary to be in full compliance with the law. None of the payers are ready to test yet, so there will certainly be many updates needed to the software during the next 18—24 months. This is our primary goal. We will keep our customers up to date and make sure the software performs as necessary.

With the Stratford program you won't need a billing service or clearinghouse to edit your claims. The editing is done locally, inside your computer. If the payer will accept claims directly, your Stratford program is probably already programmed to allow you to "go direct". Please let us know if you want to begin transmitting to a payer. We will determine if the payer accepts the ANSI X.12 format. If they do accept this standard format we will do our best to get the software approved. Please send any request by email to: support@stratfordsoftware.com or you can fax to (650) 692-1073. Please do not call in these requests as we must start a paper-trail until you are running successfully. Sometimes there are many steps involved. Some payers/clearinghouses re-

inside this issue

- Stratford Notes
- From the EDI corner
- Email support
- Why Windows 98/NT/2000?
- Stratford's new program
- Software Support Notes
- Internet Resources

Stratford has more than **4,200** licensed users

quire the provider to fill out forms and request IDs. We will need this information in order to build templates so your computer will be able to transmit claims for you.

If the payer is capable of sending remittance notices by return reports in the ANSI X.12 format, then the Stratford program will probably be able to auto-post your payments and adjustments. Sometimes the return remittance files are in a 'compressed' format and need a special program to 'unpack' them. We have the necessary programs for most payers available. •

Pre-paid support customers may use email for fastest response:

support@stratfordsoftware.com

You can find Stratford's Internet server at this address:
<http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/>

Training Classes ***SHS Software Basic Training***

In the Stratford Classroom:

By Appointment only \$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*).

FROM THE EDI CORNER

EDI is Stratford's specialty. The format that Stratford currently uses for all new customer installations is named ANSI X.12. We support all current versions including 303x, 304x, 305x, 307x.

We also have version 4010 available for testing when any payers/clearinghouses are ready. All payers and clearinghouses in the US will be required to accept Version 4010 sometime in the near future, possibly by the year 2002. That is only 18 months away so now is the time to begin planning for the change.

We have recently begun testing version 4010 with two Medicare contractors and we should be approved soon. When we are approved, we will use version 4010 exclusively whenever possible. It is possible that many payers and clearinghouses will wait as long as possible to begin supporting this new version. Unfortunately this will cause many customers to be forced to change at the last minute. Those Stratford customers who subscribe to software support will be notified when the new version is available to them. At that time we will schedule the change at their convenience. •

EMAIL SUPPORT

This year we will be making many changes so it will be easier for our customers to receive high quality, speedy support using the Internet. If you have email capability and wish to try it for support, please do it now. Just send your email to

support@stratfordsoftware.com.

If you just want to see how fast we respond, you are welcome to send an email asking for a test response. We would like to receive any comments you have about our Internet support. •

WHY WINDOWS 98/NT/2000?

There are several reasons why we have designed the new program so that it will only work on the latest version of Microsoft Windows. The most important reason is that more people are using the latest versions of Microsoft Windows. Some surveys by payers have shown that nearly 48% of the healthcare market's operating system of choice is Windows 98.

The newer operating systems have much better tools available and are capable of creating a much more powerful and attractive program. Software development is very time-consuming and expensive. Most new development projects should be directed toward the future and not limited to the present hardware and software. This is why the new Stratford program will require significantly more powerful computers than the present version. •

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.

STRATFORD'S NEW PROGRAM

Our new 'windows-only' program is now in beta. If you are interested in participating, please let us know by email at this address: beta@stratfordsoftware.com

The beta program is only available to existing customers who subscribe to our software support. The beta must be downloaded from our Internet web server. The beta is more than 10 megabytes so we suggest that you use a high-speed connection such as a cable modem.

Here are some questions and answers that we have received recently.

Q. It took much longer to download the latest version than the one before. Why is that?

A. The latest version released around the middle of May, 2000 is about 1 megabyte larger than the previous release. The latest version is complete except for some reports and the scheduler.

We have finished most of the work on the end-of-month reports including the 680/685/687 series of reports. We will be testing the scheduler code in June and, if possible, release a beta around the end of June with it. This has been pushed back a month or so, because we determined that the coding that we were going to use was not acceptable for several reasons. The software modules that we are testing now look very much like the Microsoft 'Outlook' program just like the previous one did, but the internal functions appear to be much better for our market.

Q. The scheduler in the present program

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.



does not work for my office. I want to use the mouse, see a calendar display, etc. I want pretty graphics. Will this be available in the new program?

A. Yes. The new program will be very pretty. It has all the neat graphics that you expect from a 'true windows' program.

The first release of the scheduler will be functionally similar to the present scheduler except for the appearance. New features will be added over the coming year. We hope to have the scheduler in the beta sometime in June or July 2000. If you are in the beta program you will be able to use the scheduler and recommend changes/additions.

We plan to have a 'generic', but full-featured scheduler eventually. All functions will not be available when the program is first released. We will have periodic updates available to those customers who subscribe to our software support continuously. •

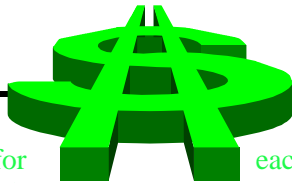
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 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.

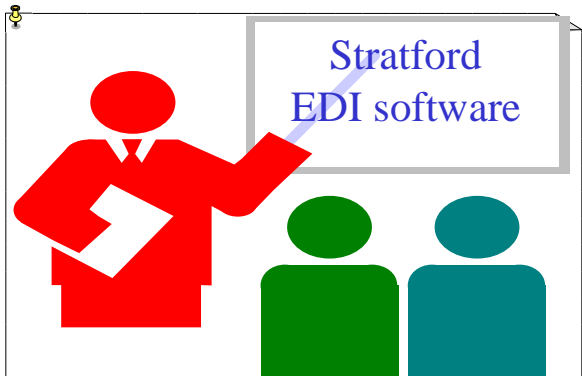
At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or three times each day. As the volume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

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



Stratford 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 are some sources for free email taken from www.altavista.com by entering "free email". Be sure to read the contract to be sure it is really free and that it is what you want.

www.excite.com

www.juno.com (Internet access & email)

www.ifreedom.com

www.hotmail.com

www.get2net.com

www.netzero.com

www.worldspy.com

www.bluelight.com (kmart/yahoo)

www.freewwwweb.com

home.thesimpsons.com

Stratford Newsletter

Copyright 2000, all rights reserved

Stratford Software, Inc.

840 Mitten Road

Burlingame, CA 94010-1304

Phone (650) 692-7970

Fax (650) 692-1073

Prepaid Voice Support Only (800) 274-4868

Internet: mail@stratfordsoftware.com

<http://www.stratfordsoftware.com/>

New Software Sales Only (800) 274-4594