

# STRATFORD

Volume 24.07

Healthcare EDI and Practice Management Software

July 2000

This newsletter has more information on our new 'windows-only' program as well as payer news.

## *stratford notes*

Medicare receives many claims that are submitted with incorrect provider information. A major problem is with groups. Many providers bill under their individual PIN numbers when they should be billing under a group number. The individual numbers are always used for the patient visit, i.e., the 'performing provider' information. The group numbers must be used for the billing information so the check will be issued correctly. If you are registered with Medicare under a group number, you must bill using that group number or your claims will be rejected beginning August 1, 2000.

Claims submitted incorrectly will be rejected as "unprocessable". These claims may not be appealed and must be resubmitted as new claims. Specifically, no checks will be written for individual providers who are registered with Medicare as belonging to a group.

This is not a change in policy but is a change in the computer to enforce the HCFA standards per MCM Section 3060.1 "Payment to Employer of Physician" •

We have had so many requests for an upgrade to our scheduler in the past six months that we moved it up on our priority list for the beta version of our new

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

"Windows-only" program. In June we added most of the new scheduler code. Some of the things we wanted to do required "C" programming and so there are more than 10 new "OCX" components. These are "Active-X" components like some we have had on our web site over the past 5 years. They allow us to do things that are very difficult to do with a database management compiler. You will have the ability to create appointments with your mouse and "drag" to the left or right to change the starting/ending time. For provider groups, you will be able to "drag" an appointment from one provider to another provider with the mouse. All the changes will be handled internally by the program. •

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

**support@stratfordsoftware.com**

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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 .....**

Stratford recently got a contract to transmit the UB92 (HCFA 1450) format electronically (ANSI X.12) in all states and Puerto Rico. We already transmit the HCFA 1500 format in all states and the UB92 in most states. This is just one more step in our plan to be the No. 1 EDI software company in the United States.

We are testing the eEOB (ANSI 835) with Noridian now.

We are testing with Healtheon/Web MD for various formats. •

### **OLD, OUTDATED PRODUCTS**

#### **5.25 inch Floppy Diskettes**

If you are one of our few customers who do not have anything but a 5.25 diskette drive, please contact us. Due to the increased number of updates we are having to do because of HCFA (Medicare) changes, now is the time to upgrade your old hardware.

Recently our old floppy diskette update machine that creates our updates on 5.25 floppies burned up. We are not able to get parts to make it work again reliably and

will no longer be able to support it. It would be very expensive to outsource 5.25 inch updates for so few customers. This type of floppy is the least reliable update media that is still in use. Most computers built since 1990 have had the “newer” 3.5 inch type as standard equipment.

#### **Dos version of PCPlus**

This is another antique version of software that we will not be able to support much longer. PCPlus software is now owned and distributed by Symantec a few miles south of us near San Jose California. The old dos version hasn't been a current product for many years. They recommend that you upgrade to one of the Windows versions. We recommend you call us before you upgrade if you aren't sure.

We have been having problems keeping our scripts up to date for this old program when so few customers have it. Also, we don't have any dos-based computers around anymore to test the scripts. We do our best to support a product at least 5 years after it is outdated. This product is far past that and so it is time to retire it.

If you don't know what either of the above products are, then don't worry, you probably don't have a problem. We have already notified all the customers that use these products (as far as we know).

It is not a good idea to have your “books” on a very old computer that could fail anytime and leave you stranded. If your backup media is outdated, it may be difficult to restore it to a new computer. •

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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 providing software support.

## STRATFORD'S NEW PROGRAM

Here are some questions and answers about the new program in 'beta' now.

Q: When I press dot-enter in the xyz field I don't get a lookup like in the old program.

A: That is correct. The program is Windows/Office 2000 compliant or at least that is our plan and dot-enter is not part of the Microsoft spec. We have (or plan to) replace it with a right-click menu. If you are in the beta and you can't get a right-click menu in one of these lookup places, you should report it to [beta@stratfordsoftware.com](mailto:beta@stratfordsoftware.com) as with all problems.

Q: one of the forms will not fit on my screen so I can't see the save button at the bottom.

A: Be sure you have your screen resolution set to 800 by 600 or more. That is the minimum required for the new program. This is pretty much the standard for all websites on the Internet and all newer software programs. If you have Win98 you can go to START | SETTINGS | CONTROL PANEL | DISPLAY | 'Settings' tab | and look in the lower right quadrant of the form for an area labeled "Screen area". You should see 800 by 600 or larger numbers. If you don't, just slide the pointer to the right and press apply. You will get a message and most of the time you can just click 'yes' or whatever it wants. This will make everything have a smaller font, of course. If you have a 14" monitor, it may not be acceptable to you. You can now get a 17" monitor inexpensively and that is what we recommend.

Q: I am in the beta program. I just learned

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that you put a new update on the web site on 6/9/2000 but you did not send me an email so I didn't know about it. Why?

A: We have now finished most of the programming that required design and database modifications. This means the updates will be much more frequent now. For this reason we will no longer send out emails every time we make a small change. We sometimes have an update every other day. I don't think most people want to receive an email from us that often.

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On 6/9/2000 we added an update log to the bottom of the download web page that has the date of change and some comments about the changes. To see if you want to download a new version you should check the bottom of page whenever you have some time to work with the beta.

We added many Active X components and scheduler code to the beta in June. The components are registered with Windows on your computer with no user intervention and no code in the installer. •

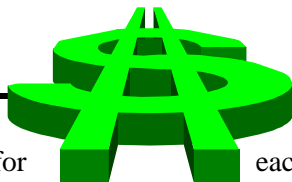
## SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 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.

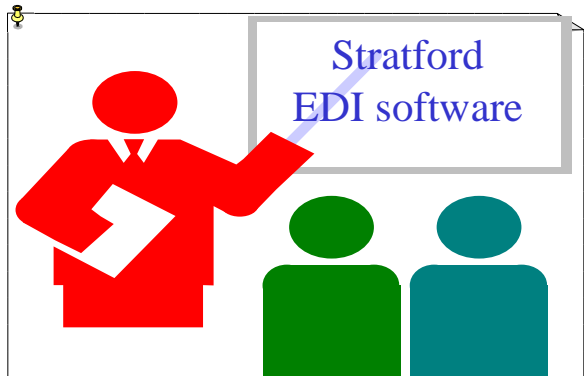
At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or three times each day. As the volume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



## INTERNET RESOURCES

Here are some sources for free email taken from [www.altavista.com](http://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](http://www.excite.com)

[www.juno.com](http://www.juno.com) (Internet access & email)

[www.ifreedom.com](http://www.ifreedom.com)

[www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)

[www.get2net.com](http://www.get2net.com)

[www.netzero.com](http://www.netzero.com)

[www.worldspy.com](http://www.worldspy.com)

[www.bluelight.com](http://www.bluelight.com) (kmart/yahoo)

[www.freewweb.com](http://www.freewweb.com)

[home.thesimpsons.com](http://home.thesimpsons.com)

### *Stratford Newsletter*

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