

STRATFORD

Volume 26.09

Healthcare EDI and Practice Management

September 2002

stratford notes

This newsletter has more information about our new “windows-only” software. You can try it out by letting us know that you want to be on our “windows list”. Please send an email to rc1@stratfordsoftware.com

Stratford’s software is now officially HIPAA compliant. If you transmit Medicare claims to NHIC please note that Stratford is now approved for transmitting v4010 for both California and New England. If you subscribe to our software support on a continuing basis, you will receive an update automatically that will convert you to the compliant version this summer. No action will be required by you. The conversion will occur automatically and take about one minute, depending on the speed of your hardware. We would like for all Stratford customers to be converted before October so we will be able to handle many new customers who are forced to convert from software that does not support the new format. We believe that there are thousands of providers with software that does not meet the new requirements. Many companies are not able to support the new format. We believe that most companies will advise their customers to transmit all their claims through a clearinghouse. Clearinghouses charge for Medicare claims so that will be a very expensive (and unnecessary) solution. Stratford customers who subscribe to software support on a continuing basis will have no additional charges related to the conversion to the new format. In fact, we have made the conversion ‘transparent’ so you will notice no differ-

inside this issue

- Stratford Notes
- From the EDI corner
- More Support Notes
- Questions and Answers about the new version of Windows-Only Stratford Software
- Software Support Notes
- Internet Resources

Stratford has nearly **4,800** licensed users

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

ence in the way you use the software. •

If you transmit to WebMD/Envoy/NEIC, be aware that they have changed their access number. Transmitting to WebMD is not free. We were told that you can find your invoice at the end of the report that you receive from them. •

Last month we mentioned about how **you can auto-pay your bill by having a credit card on file**. If you pay for a full year in advance, you receive the 11th & 12th months at no charge. You still get a fully itemized monthly statement. •

We are working on a new claim transmission module that will eliminate the need for ProComm for most of our users. •

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

support@stratfordsoftware.com

Training Classes

SHS Software Basic Training

In the Stratford Classroom
by Appointment only \$275

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 only*).

FROM THE EDI CORNER

Stratford is fully compliant with the new HIPAA federal law as it applies to software vendors like us. We are ready to test our ANSI X.12 version 4010 format with any payer. •

We are working with Proxy Med to enable Stratford users to send claims using FTP over their Internet connection. •

We have successfully semi-automated the Internet claims transmission to EDS Medi-Cal/Medicaid. •

MORE SUPPORT NOTES

CD Updates are now being shipped to our clients at least once per quarter. Our new system of insuring that each customer gets an update at least once per 90 days should help eliminate most payer claim rejections. This service is only available if you subscribe to software support continuously and accept updates on CD. •

A new manual format is available. If you have wanted a manual that would lay flat on the table and have pages that could be removed, you can now have it. We

have a new vendor that is supplying the manual in a small 3-ring binder format. It looks like the old manual in size and design but is much more convenient to use. The price is \$25 (+ tax & shipping). •

Shipping charges have increased. If you can accept your software updates on CD, we will send it by US mail and the charges are very reasonable. Of course paper shipment charges will increase. Our prices are still much lower than office products stores even with increased shipping. •

Win2000, XP As we have already stated, we will support these operating systems. We will try to support WinME, however, we cannot recommend it to anyone for any purpose. We continue to use Windows 98 on most of our computers because it seems to be the most stable and trouble-free. We believe that Win98SE is the best operating system that Microsoft has developed. We do have systems with WinME, 2000, and XP for testing. They all run our software just fine with no problems. However, they all have problems with most other software and we cannot use them for day-to-day activity in our company. If all you do is run the Stratford program, then you will be ok. If you run a combination of other programs and you have a choice of operating systems, we recommend that you select Win 98SE, second, pick Win2000. We definitely do **not** recommend XP for networking. •

Your clearinghouse may have setup fees and/or charge you for EDI claims, but Stratford does not. •

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.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT STRATFORD SOFTWARE

Q: I have been transmitting claims to Medicare and Medicaid in my state for many years. Now I would like to start transmitting private claims. What are my options with my Stratford program?

A: You have many options with the Stratford program. EDI (electronic data interchange) is our specialty. Your options will depend on your location and the payers that your patient population uses for their healthcare coverage. For example, in California you can transmit directly to Blue Cross and Blue Shield (2 different payers in California; not a single organization as in some other states).

Some payers, especially local HMO's and similar organizations, cannot accept claims directly and require you to transmit to a clearinghouse. The clearinghouse then 'translates' the claims as required by the payer. In some cases, the clearinghouse may even check the claims for accuracy and do some reformatting depending on your specialty. This is all 'transparent' to you and is determined by the arrangement that the payer has with the clearinghouse.

The Stratford program can format your claims for transmission to most major clearinghouses in the United States as well as all Medicare contractors in the United States. We also can format correctly for many of the Medicaid, BC and BS programs, even local 'pilot' programs that some states have set up. Be sure to

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.



ask if you have any special needs. We will try to accommodate you.

Q: What clearinghouse does Stratford recommend?

A: As stated in the previous question, we format for many different clearinghouses and it is up to you to determine which clearinghouse is best for you. The most important consideration, of course, is that the clearinghouse can accept claims for the payers that your patient population uses. Another important factor is the cost involved. **Most clearinghouses are now charging you for processing claims, even though they may not have charged in the past.** This is probably due to reduced payments from the payer to the clearinghouse. For example, Proxy Med is a major clearinghouse in the United States, possibly the largest, or at least they accept a very large number of payers. You can use Proxy Med in all states and the cost is much lower than some other clearinghouses. If you don't know which clearinghouse to use, you could check out www.proxymed.com and see if they will work for you. If so, we will assist you in getting started. Just email or fax to Strat-

SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 1 Email requests for support get Priority Service.
- 2 If you send an Email or fax with a description of the problem, your call is given priority over other Emails and faxes.
- 3 Do not call more than one time. The second call places your first call at the bottom of our callback list.

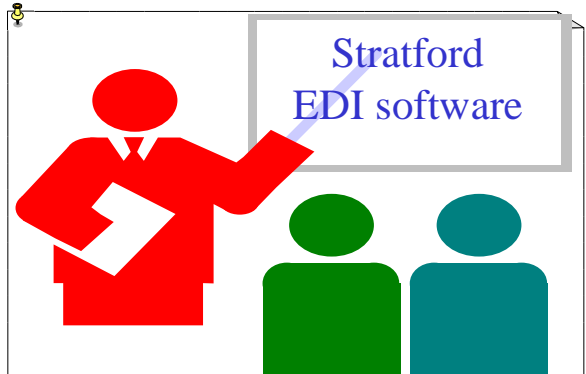
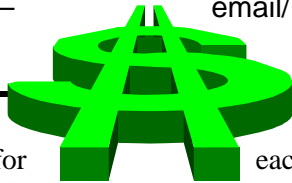
We can receive many support requests in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we 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 best by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. We check our email constantly — at least every 5 minutes. We are putting most of our resources into email and other methods that utilize the Internet. If you have an ICQ number, we can support it. Let us know.

We are interested in hearing from people who would like to receive support by Internet — email/ICQ, etc.

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

Ever wonder about Medicare/Medicaid rules on a specific subject. They are on the internet at this address:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/>

Most healthcare providers will receive more information than they want about the HIPAA law this year. Here is a link to the amendment to the new law.

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:H.R.3323.ENR:>

(Note: be sure to put the colon at the end of this link)

Here is a link to official information about the HIPAA law:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/>

Stratford Newsletter

Copyright 2002, 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