

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Practice Management

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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 in about one minute, depending on the speed of your hardware. •

HIPAA privacy rule information: We have adopted contract language provided by the U.S. department of Health & Human Services. This contract is for vendors (Business Associates) like Stratford that do business with healthcare providers. If you would like to see this contract (and possibly comment on it) you may visit our web site and look at the first ‘News’ item. Since most of our customers are directly affected by the HIPAA privacy rule, we have provided more information on the back page of this newsletter. •

HIPAA privacy and wireless networks (802.11b). Although this does not really involve Stratford Software, we have had questions from customers. We advise that you do not use a wireless network when you work with patient information. The wireless networks that we know of are not secure. We believe you must wait until a

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Stratford has more than **4,800** licensed users

hardware vendor can deliver HIPAA compliant equipment. Also, be very careful about interfacing with other networks. •

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 have developed a new claim transmission module that eliminates the need for ProComm for most of our users. We already have scripts for many payers and clearinghouses. It works with the current dos version as well as the new windows version. Many Windows XP users need it. Maybe you can use it? •

Pre-paid support customers may use email for the 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 \$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: In a past newsletter you stated you had no plans to support Linux. Is that still true?

A: Yes, but... **We continue to look at Linux and think about it.** It simply has too little 'market saturation' to justify committing resources. Even though that is true, we can report that you can run our program on Linux. Here is all we know for now: If you have a Linux server using SAMBA (networking stuff), with a Win98 workstation, you can install our program from the workstation on to the server. You can then run the program from the workstation. Note that the programs and your patient data are on the Linux server. If this is of interest to you and you are proficient with Linux, we would appreciate any feedback. It is almost the same as using an NT server for your files. You could probably even use an Apple computer if you had the proper server software to allow a Windows workstation access. We can't support this and you may not call for help or even for more information (for now).•

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.

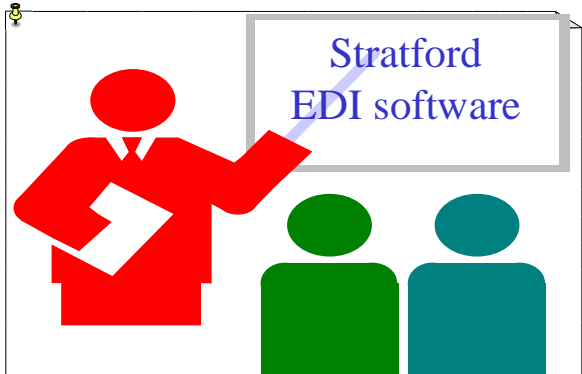
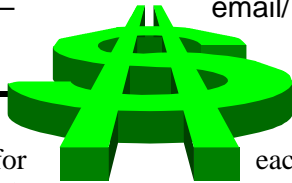
We can receive many support requests in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we 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

What is a 'Notice of Privacy Practice'? (Note: this is **privacy**, not **private**) Many providers are not aware of the HIPAA requirement that the patient be given this notice by a provider. Also, the provider must get the patient's signature and keep this document on file. Here is an example of a preliminary draft on an AMA web site:

www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/6699.html

Many providers are putting this notice on their web site. This notice should be effective no later than April 14, 2003.

On 8/14/2002 the final rule is published here:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/

Stratford Newsletter

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