

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Practice Management

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stratford notes

User meeting in Las Vegas. We have had many requests from our users for a meeting where they can get to know the Stratford support team and ask questions. Las Vegas has low cost room rates and frequent airline access from all over the US. Since Stratford is the software you use to collect your hard-earned fees, the meeting is probably tax-deductible. Of course, you have to ask your tax professional about that. The meeting will be structured but informal. There will be meeting with lots of free time so you can enjoy the Las Vegas scene. Since this is the first meeting open to all users and prospective users, we are asking for your input as to dates and interest in attending. Please let us know by email: lasvegas@stratfordsoftware.com. The meeting will be Wed, Thu, Fri with a special meeting on Tues evening. Tentative dates are Jan 21-24, Feb 4-7, Feb 18-21, Mar 4-7, Mar 18-21, Apr 1-4. If you are interested in giving a session and/or answering user questions, let us know — especially if you have been a trainer. (you may get some of your expenses paid, etc) There may be some prizes for licensed users. We will not be selling anything so don't bring any money or you may lose it in a casino. •

Holiday Schedule:

- - we will be closed- -

Christmas: 24th & 25th

New Years: 31st & Jan 1st

We hope you have a happy new year and that the economy picks up next year. •

Stratford's software is now officially HIPAA compliant. If you transmit Medicare claims to NHIC, Stratford is now ap-

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Stratford has almost **4,900** licensed users

proved 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. •

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. •

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 presently testing for HIPAA with Noridian (Medicare contractor for several states), Trail Blazer, Riverbend, Florida Medicare, Administar Indiana, Railroad Medicare and various East Coast payers such as Mass Health Tufts and BCBSMA.

ProxyMed (a clearinghouse that we recommend) will be able to accept UB-92 claims as well as dental claims in the future.

We are working with ProxyMed 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. •

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. •

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: So, now it looks like you may support Linux in the future?

A: Yes, it is possible. Here is a recent development that convinces us that Linux is a significant improvement in operating systems. As most people who use Windows realize, it is very unstable. Newer versions add features without fixing problems. For example, we find WinXP to be much less stable than Win2000. IBM and Lawrence Livermore Labs (LLL) have selected Linux for the future 'Blue Gene' family of supercomputers. The newest version is 'Blue Gene/L'. It will be 15 times faster and 15 times more power efficient than any present supercomputer and will require 1/50th the space. This computer will have more total computing power than the top 500 supercomputers in the world combined. IBM plans to market these for commercial use while LLL will work with the NSA for government projects. As you can imagine, an operating system must be very stable for a computer like this. Linux is available now for desktop PCs. •

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.

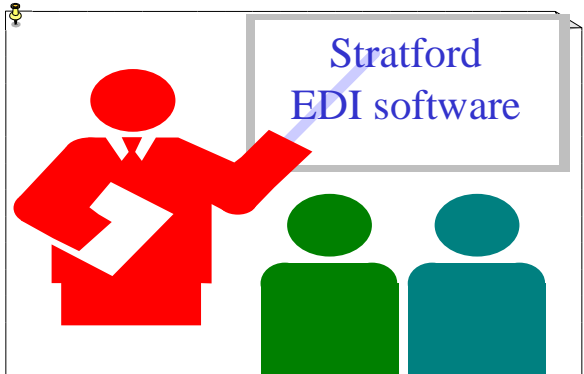
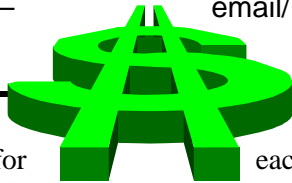
We can receive many support requests in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we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

Medicare & You 2003. This is a handbook from Medicare about your (patient's) rights:

<http://www.medicare.gov/publications/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf>

Here is a good FAQ for people with Medicare coverage:

http://medicare.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/medicare.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php

This is where you can go to get all the official information related to the Medicare program:

<http://www.medicare.gov/>

Here is a newspaper for physicians with ongoing coverage of HIPAA:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/public/journals/amnews/amnews.htm>

Stratford Newsletter

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