

Increasing Process Agility and Financial Stability with Epitomax®

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The Guidance Center Gains from Epitomax Software and Services

Challenge:

An outpatient behavioral health and counseling agency serving Greater New Orleans, Louisiana, The Guidance Center was impacted by inefficiencies in their existing service model compounded by ever-changing healthcare delivery and standards on the technology side and factors such as shifts in MCOs and payment models on the finance side.

According to Mike McNeil, CEO of The Guidance Center, "... Our clinical staff was frustrated with the inefficiencies that were being built into their service deliveries because of difficulties with documenting notes and getting things scheduled. Our management team was also frustrated because questions and issues were being raised by senior leadership and they couldn't find an answer to them."

Mike also added that before Epitomax EHR and Billing system implementation, the Finance Department at The Guidance Center experienced some difficulty managing payroll due to providers not being able to get billable services documented in the most timely and accurate fashion, which subsequently led to billing problems.



The Guidance Center

Providing quality services to Greater New Orleans since 1983, The Guidance Center, Inc. is an outpatient mental health and counseling agency. Locally owned and operated, their mission is to provide accessible and effective outpatient mental health services to the residents of St. Bernard and neighboring parishes. Their approach is client-centered and solution-focused with a goal of achieving specific outcomes as defined by the client, including adults, children and adolescents. Continuously CARF accredited since 2009, The Guidance Center accepts Medicaid (All Healthy Louisiana Plans), Medicare and most Advantage plans, most private insurance plans, and self-pay.

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Solution:

With the frustrating inefficiencies in day-to-day service work and evolving healthcare environment, The Guidance Center leadership team selected secure hosted Epitomax EHR and Billing largely for the Web-based solution's highly-configurable platform as well as the Professional Services group's highly-responsive customer service in providing Web forms design and meeting other organization-unique requirements.

The consequences of change have never been better. "With Epitomax, our clinical staff can easily document notes on the forms that the Epitomax Forms Team designed for us," Mike said. "Appointments are able to be scheduled with ease using the Scheduling system. Our clients can receive notifications, so they don't miss appointments. Reports can be run to find the answers that our senior leadership team requests and audits run smoothly because of the reports that can show the data requested."

Adrienne Landry, Operations Manager at The Guidance Center has also found great use in the new Epitomax EHR and Billing solution. For example, with the flexible Scheduling view, she noted: "We are able to view a calendar by staff, by location or view it for month, day, week. Using the Scheduling system has helped us with our prescriber appointments and managing new client appointments."

In terms of health delivery, each state has unique healthcare system requirements, challenges and terminology. Chief Operating Officer at The Guidance Center, Cecilia McNeil, added: "This is a time of rapid change in Louisiana and there have been multiple changes over the past year... We value Epitomax because it offers us flexibility. There are things within our control that we can set in the system. For those items that we cannot do on our own, the Epitomax team has been very responsive. Changes are made quickly and effectively."

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On the service billing and Revenue Cycle Management side, Mike also said that, “very seldom do we have an issue of getting Epitomax to line up with the payer system. Whenever there is a glitch or problem with billing, more often than not, it’s on the payer’s side where they have changed some paradigm or some equation in the mix and forgot to tell us they were changing it. When we have to make changes, we can do them very quickly [with Epitomax].”

Not only is Epitomax highly flexible, but our dedicated Forms Team helps increase effectiveness and productivity around implementing the needed Web forms. “The Forms Team has been very responsive,” Adrienne shared. “They’ve been able to tell us, ‘Well, if this is what you are looking for, this is probably what we should do.’ Rather than just doing what we ask for.” She added, “having someone there to streamline the process is helpful.”

Results:

Agility yields stability. According to Mike, “The financial stability of our organization is in much better shape with Epitomax in place. Our receivables are a lot steadier and the account and cash flow are more consistent.” Jacob Breaux, Finance Director, added that: “We’ve been able to accommodate all the different requirements for MCOs, whether it’s billing or requiring certain information on different forms – progress notes, treatment plans. At the same time, we’ve been able to reduce billing staff. That’s a nice little savings right there. It pays for the system.”

Integrative is a Health and Human Services software company that provides innovative solutions to connect, collaborate and coordinate care, bill, report and manage services across and among Health and Human Services agencies, including Public Health, Behavioral & Mental Health, Early Intervention, Foster Care, IDD, Education, Justice & Correctional, Community Providers, and the patients and consumers which they serve. Integrative is a Harris Healthcare Company. Learn more at harrisintegrative.com.