

CUSTOMER PROFILE



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WHITTIER HEALTH NETWORK AUTOMATES BENEFIT ENROLLMENT, ONBOARDING AND OTHER PROCESSES WITH BP LOGIX PROCESS DIRECTOR

Whittier Health Network, founded in 1982, provides quality, comprehensive medical care to its residents in a compassionate “family” care setting.

The network is comprised of Acute Rehabilitation Hospitals, sub-acute rehabilitation and long-term care facilities, management services, an institutional pharmacy, a home health care agency, and an adult Psychiatric Hospital.

Whittier provides a seamless continuum of care at every level and every aspect of post-acute care – from inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation to respite care, health management and assisted living.



Whittier Rehabilitation Hospitals, centrally located in the Massachusetts area, serve patients throughout New England. The company manages nine nursing homes in Massachusetts and New York, provides home health care to patients in Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire and employs 2,500 people across 12 locations.



AUTOMATING THE BENEFIT ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Dan Pelosi is CIO of Whittier Health Network and is responsible for setting technology direction for the company. Seeking a way to gain efficiencies across the organization is one of his key objectives. As a result, Pelosi identified a logical starting point for improving the company's efficiency: automating a manual, unwieldy, time-consuming and highly time-sensitive process: benefit enrollment.

"The benefit enrollment process is a brutal one that we engage in every fall," Pelosi remarked, "as all 2,500 employees have to be enrolled within a three week timeframe. It's also very challenging due to the sheer volume of documents that have to be processed. I knew, however, that the process didn't have to be that onerous – and wanted a solution that would take the pain out of the process," he remarked.



Another objective for whatever product was selected would be to make Whittier more efficient. According to Pelosi, "Healthcare today is a world of spiraling costs,

chief most among them labor, and declining reimbursement rates. In order to make our mission to provide high quality, comprehensive medical care to our residents economically sustainable, it is critical that we become more efficient."

Acknowledging that any solution Whittier acquired had to include workflows, electronic forms, an automated review and approval process and be competitively priced, Pelosi tasked his team with finding products to evaluate.

A PRODUCT FOR THE BUSINESS

IT started its search with an understanding of Whittier's budget, timing and the fact that the software selected needed to integrate with, not replace, its existing document management system. It also had to: 1) Be a product business users would relate to, 2) Have a short learning curve and 3) Include an interface that would be familiar to users.

Pelosi reviewed the products his team short-listed and recommended BP Logix Process Director to the senior management team. Pleased that Process Director met its

criteria, could be immediately deployed to address an initial set of needs and fit within its budget, Whittier management approved the recommendation.

"As soon as we began to deploy Process Director I knew that this was how we were going to be doing business going forward. I could see Process Director permeating the organization, streamlining it and providing a better experience for customers and employees across the company," Pelosi observed.

A ROLLOUT STRATEGY THAT DEMONSTRATED RESULTS

The IT strategy was twofold: 1) Show employees that Process Director was easy to use and would provide a look-and-feel familiar to them and 2) Identify processes to automate that would demonstrate 'quick hits' for Whittier Health. Beginning with its online prospective employee application process (Apply Online) Pelosi began the roll out of Process Director.

The second process IT automated was the benefit enrollment process. The then-manual process consisted of stacks of forms that were scanned and sent to employees, with information, signatures and approvals repeated multiple times. Automating and streamlining that process and integrating it with Whittier's document management system provided employees company-wide with a friendlier and more effective process – resulting in a benefit enrollment process that was less challenging and less painful for everyone.

As an organization focused on continually getting better at what it does, Whittier Health has maintained a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Initiative throughout its corporate existence. With the objective of addressing any areas within the company that would benefit from improving, CQI became the third 'quick hit' process that IT deployed. Developing an electronic form for incident reporting, an automated workflow for the process, electronic reviews and approvals and reports, the Continuous Quality Improvement Initiative has a new look-and-feel that encourages employees to identify ways in which the company can better serve its clients.

Based on the successful deployment of the first three processes Whittier Health is focusing on its onboarding and referral tracking systems, the next processes in the queue for Process Director.

A GOOD USER EXPERIENCE

"Apply Online was our first project for Process Director and it was an unqualified success. We have a streamlined process,

a PDF that goes to the right person, a searchable database that anyone can use – and no longer pay maintenance on an HR application we outgrew and disliked,” said Pelosi.

Prior to Process Director, employees had to figure out where and to whom the application forms needed to be sent. With Process Director the form is available on the intranet and the workflow routes it to the appropriate individuals automatically. According to Pelosi, “We are getting eyes on applications much faster... and the right eyes. In addition a process that formerly took weeks now takes days.”

Another benefit of deploying Process Director is that IT can import information directly into its document management system. Having unalterable documents has also been very important. The labor and cost savings, in combination with providing a better experience for users, has made Process Director very popular at Whittier Health.

THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATION

Like all forward-looking organizations, being more efficient and effective is important to Whittier Health Network. The initial business problems the company addressed with Process Director have already demonstrated both time and cost savings. Integration with Active Directory, single sign-on, tying in to its SQL server and document management software plus the ability to run reports against multiple databases have been successes for IT.

An unplanned benefit, one that has pleased senior management, has been eliminating 20% yearly maintenance on products that Pelosi refers to as ‘uni-taskers,’ (apologies to Alton Brown) including the online application and referral tracking processes.

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And while Pelosi anticipated a fast return on investment on the benefit enrollment process, he anticipates an additional ROI with the onboarding application. Happily, the results of deploying Process Director have demonstrated further benefits by replacing labor-intensive tasks with integrated workflows, electronic forms, digital signatures and unalterable documents. It is also achieving additional cost savings.

AN APPROACH THAT PAYS

Pelosi believes that the key to automating business processes at Whittier Health lies in the flexibility of Process Director – flexibility that IT will employ as it expands to the Help Desk, Medical Records department and other areas of its business.

Beyond the 20% Whittier is no longer paying for maintenance on one-task products, the company is freeing employees to do less mundane tasks and providing better service to its customers.



“Unless an organization prefers to live in a world where one product (attempts) to do it all, the best-of-breed approach with a tool like Process Director will be invaluable to any organization,” concluded Pelosi.