Access Services of Eastern Pennsylvania

CHALLENGE

Access Services provides a wide range of community-based support services to over 2000 individuals and families in Eastern Pennsylvania. Before implementing Evolv-CS®, the electronic health record (EHR) developed by Defran Systems, the agency utilized an electronic non web-based system for its records management. This system contained several flaws that hindered the agency's performance.

The time-consuming clinical documentation process of the previous system limited the agency's ability to take advantage of their client data. It categorized appointments by date rather than client name, making later retrieval by case workers an unwieldy process. This issue encouraged staff to return to their original paper-based record management system.

Each of Access Services' 14 programs has its own distinct funder and regulatory requirements. Therefore they then developed separate electronic databases to meet each department's specific needs. The organization's hope was that this system would allow all data to be stored in a single place despite each individual program's complexities.

However, this solution could not handle meeting every program's requirements, so Access Services abandoned it and returned to each department's original, independent solution. This frustrated the agency, as it clearly postponed the goals they were working towards, such as:

More easily sharing data with staff

• Moving away from the use of Word documents for assessments and reports.

• Creating a standardized process across all programs and regions for the uniformity of client data being collected.

Complete capture of client data

• Moving away from homegrown databases that do not fully capture and track all of the client information required for adequate documentation.

• The ability to capture client data through individual and aggregate reports for program directors.

Reducing critical time lost during emergency situations

• Crisis management teams responding to in-home crisis calls did not have a web-based solution to access the information they needed. They had to locate and print out whichever existing patient records were available from their office before rushing to the emergency site.

SOLUTION

Evolv-CS provided Access Services with the ability to ensure that relevant information from each individual program could be shared across the agency. The agency simplified their information management by eliminating many redundant forms and documents. By default, Evolv-CS collects most required information, and staff can easily modify the system to gather any additional relevant data.

Evolv-CS facilitates seamless intra-agency communication and care coordination in the following ways:

• Web-based functionality provides authorized workers with mobile access to the system. In situations where every minute counts, crisis call teams can now access client information at the point of service with laptops.

• The sophisticated yet flexible data structure of Evolv-CS tracks all categories of information. The system categorizes client data by name rather than date, which enables the agency to search for client records with greater precision.

• Database administrators can create custom fields and forms, saving the cost of having the modifications performed by the vendor.

RESULTS

The implementation of Defran Systems' EHR solution, Evolv-CS, has helped Access Services by improving the agency's daily operations and overall coordination of care. Using an electronic system properly matched to the agency's needs has resulted in a streamlined single data entry approach, enabled certain departments to go paperless and has reduced data duplication. Additionally, crisis teams can access client information and collaterals while on crisis calls, making their work more efficient.

Access Services is seeing an agency-wide cultural shift due to the ease of working with Evolv-CS. As a system that is user friendly and streamlines processes, it enables staff to be more efficient with their documentation and provides accountability around case notes. Because Evolv-CS allows for easy access to client records, has customization ability, supports information sharing and provides usable reports, staff are viewing Evolv-CS positively and with enthusiasm. The paperless, centralized nature of the system frees up physical space and saves time by eliminating the need for double-documentation and duplicate data entry for clients in multiple programs.

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