

GOING MOBILE

Behavioral health nonprofit wins a Computerworld Honors award while using Dell™ Latitude™ laptops to serve more than 500 patients each month



SOLUTIONS
• MOBILITY
• SECURITY



CUSTOMER PROFILE

COUNTRY: Glendale, AZ (USA)

INDUSTRY: Healthcare

FOUNDED: 1968

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 160

WEB ADDRESS:

www.touchstonebh.org

CHALLENGE

Processes for documenting and updating patient data were manual and time consuming, and caregivers had to use shared desktops to record their notes at the end of the day.

SOLUTION

Touchstone equipped its caregivers with Dell laptops and a hosted, secure electronic medical records (EMR) solution so they could enter notes and access medical records from the field.

BENEFITS

GET IT FASTER

- One point of contact streamlines procurement and support

RUN IT BETTER

- Up to 500 more patients seen each month due to improved staff efficiency
- Better communication between caregivers
- 99.99% data entry accuracy
- Easier HIPAA compliance through electronic records
- 5% increase in amount billed per caregiver vs. previous year
- Billing code errors eliminated

The Dell logo, consisting of the word 'DELL' in a stylized, white, sans-serif font, set against a black circular background with a white border.

Growing up is tough for anyone, but for children facing especially difficult circumstances, it can be a monumental challenge. Since 1968, caregivers at Touchstone Behavioral Health have provided counseling and mental health services to children who qualify for Arizona's Medicaid program for those who are not privately insured. Unfortunately, there's never a shortage of patients, so the more visits counselors can make, the better.

“WE HAVE A RULE THAT WE WILL ALWAYS SEE A CHILD IN CRISIS, REGARDLESS OF THE TIME. THE DELL LAPTOPS ARE HELPING US MEET THIS OBLIGATION AND ALLOWING US TO HAVE MORE OF AN IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY.”

Steven Porter, CIO, Touchstone Behavioral Health

As a nonprofit organization, Touchstone has to make the most of its IT budget as well as its caregivers' time. Until recently, the only computer resource the organization was able to provide to its staff was a room full of shared desktops. Processes were largely paper-based, and caregivers would retype notes gathered from client visits when they returned to the office at the end of the day, which usually took at least an hour.

HITTING THE ROAD WITH DELL

When it came time to refresh the aging desktops, Touchstone decided to better address the mobility needs of its workforce by providing caregivers with Dell Latitude D520 and D530 laptops with Intel Core Duo processors.

“Even though I had a pretty good idea of what I wanted, I got a call from our Dell sales engineer just to ensure that the laptops were meeting all our needs,” says Steven Porter, CIO. “I got

the feeling that Dell really cares about learning about our business and what our key concerns are. I also like the fact that we can deal with Dell directly without going through a reseller—the continuity of dealing with a single person certainly makes my life easier.”

With their newfound mobility, counselors are able to enter notes when they are on-site instead of deciphering handwritten notes at the end of the day. “Our counselors and therapists spend most of their time out in the field,” says Porter. “Very few of them have assigned desks. So we replaced the older hardware in the shared space with laptop stations, and put a power strip and a network cable directly up on the desktop. So they still have a place to plug in when they are on site, but they can now do most of their work from the road.”

Another critical component of the mobile solution is a hosted electronic

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE

- Dell™ Latitude™ D520 and D530 laptops with Intel® Core™ Duo processors

SOFTWARE

- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional SP3
- Microsoft Office 2007
- Symantec® Endpoint Protection 11.0
- Credible Behavioral Healthcare (hosted EMR solution)

SERVICES

- Dell Support

“THE DELL LATITUDE LAPTOPS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN OUR MOBILE STRATEGY, AND CERTAINLY HELPED US TO EARN A PRESTIGIOUS COMPUTERWORLD HONORS AWARD IN THE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS CATEGORY.”

Steven Porter, CIO, Touchstone Behavioral Health

medical records solution from Credible Behavioral Health. Using the software-as-a-service solution, Touchstone’s caregivers have browser-based, secure access to patient records. The solution also includes an offline module that allows caregivers to complete documentation and capture electronic signatures even when not connected to the Internet, and then “sync up” the next time they are online.

INTO THE WILD

At first, Porter was concerned about endpoint and network security, even though he was convinced that the Dell laptops were the right solution for his users. “Sending a bunch of laptops into the wild under the care of non-technical users scared me initially,” says Porter. “I needed to make sure that nobody would bring me back any little presents from the outside world. Our caregivers are wonderful people, but they’re very trusting and liable to click on anything.”

The final piece of the puzzle came in the form of Symantec Endpoint Protection software, which gives Porter the peace of mind that the laptops will not be compromised by viruses or malware.

“Symantec Endpoint Protection gives us reliable firewall and intrusion prevention as well as antivirus capabilities, all from a single console that is unobtrusive to the end user,” says Porter. “I’m pleased to say that our machines have universally stayed clean.”

TREATING 500 MORE PATIENTS PER MONTH

The effect of the mobile solution on Touchstone’s productivity has been tremendous. Relieved of the need to recopy their notes at the end of the day, each of the organization’s 125 caregivers can now see one additional patient per week, which adds up to approximately 500 more patients that Touchstone is able to treat each month.

“We have a rule that we will always see a child in crisis regardless of the time,” says Porter. “We’ll never turn down a child for services. The Latitude laptops are helping us meet this obligation and allowing us to have more of an impact on our community.”

The solution has also enabled better communication between caregivers. Because each team member can access up-to-date client information in real time—such as the results of

doctor’s visits, problems at school, medication changes or other changes in treatment—the solution has helped eliminate redundancies and enforce consistency.

99.99% BILLING ACCURACY

Because caregivers are now entering patient data and notes directly from field sites instead of transcribing their notes later, data entry and billing accuracy have greatly improved. In the six-month period following the introduction of the Dell laptops, caregivers entered approximately 80,000 notes into the system with better than 99.99 percent accuracy, according to Porter.

“Our auditors love the new technology, because they can actually read the caregivers’ notes,” he says. “You’ve seen your doctor’s writing. We have removed the most error-prone step from the process. The Credible EMR system has also eliminated the possibility of simply misfiling a patient chart, and made sure that charts are available only to the counselors who need to see them. This improved accuracy and security helps us prove our HIPAA compliance as well.”

Porter has noticed over a five percent increase in the amount billed per caregiver compared to the previous year, when caregivers were not using the Dell laptops. "I haven't analyzed the data enough to know if this is because we're simply billing more, or billing more accurately," he says. "But whatever the case, the increase is directly attributable to the new technology."

Business processes have also improved as a result of the mobile technology. The solution directly ties electronic clinical notes to the accounting department and enables Touchstone to bill electronically, eliminating billing code errors.

CREATING TECHNOLOGY ENVY

Touchstone's caregivers frequently interact with other behavioral health agencies in the Phoenix area to provide joint services for some clients. The word on the street is that other agencies are beginning to covet Touchstone's efficiency.

"We've created technology envy," observes Porter. "Counselors from other agencies see our caregivers pull out their Dell laptops and just start working from anywhere. Whereas all these other people have to hand write their notes, go back to their office, find the proper paper form, transcribe their notes, make copies, go back to the client, capture signatures and then submit it for billing. We've greatly simplified that process for our caregivers."

AN AWARD-WINNING IDEA

The positive impact Touchstone is having on Arizona's children has not gone unnoticed—by the families it serves or by Computerworld magazine's Honors Program Chairmen's Committee, a group of 100 corporate leaders from leading global information technology companies. Each year, members of the Committee submit nominations for organizations they feel demonstrated extraordinary use of IT to promote positive social, economic and educational change. In 2008, Touchstone received the award in the Nonprofit Organizations category.

"The Dell Latitude laptops were instrumental in our mobile strategy, and certainly helped us to earn a prestigious Computerworld Honors award in the Nonprofit Organizations category," says Porter. "I've worked with Dell for a long time, and I've always been happy with the quality of the products and services I receive. My measure of happiness is that I almost never need to call for support, yet I know it's there if I need it. I have confidence in our long-term relationship with Dell and our ability to continue to improve the service we provide to our community through the creative use of technology."

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