



Health and Human Services Delivery in the 21st Century

Delivering Outstanding Service Quality with Extreme Resource Efficiency

Seeking HHS Excellence and Efficiency

Citizens across the country rely on Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies like yours to provide a wide range of services, including family support, elderly and disability care, child protection, substance abuse, public health, and education. Historically, business practices and limited technology have resulted in multiple agencies serving clients in a disconnected fashion. Today, increased focus on access, quality, and efficiency in the financing and delivery of care is driving advancements in case coordination across agencies. As agencies look for ways to provide the best possible service quality with limited budgets and resources, the lack of structural flexibility within agencies also poses challenges. Many organizations have poured funds into slowly degrading infrastructures or spent too much time and money in implementing replacement systems, with ambivalent results.

Recently, however, agencies are finding innovative approaches to collaborate and coordinate services, give clients more choices and greater control, and operate more efficiently. Technological approaches, including solutions, resources, and thought leadership from Microsoft, can be a powerful facilitator of HHS innovation. Tools that are easy to use and can grow to meet needs over time can help agency employees and managers focus on their mission. With reasonable cost of ownership and flexible deployment models of these technologies, some agencies are already transforming the way they work. Winning solutions assist the streamlined management of client relationships and offer optimal

accountability and transparency to agency managers.

Read on to find out how technology can help your organization meet the needs of citizens, agency staff, and related agencies and service partners effectively.

Momentum for Change

HHS agencies face tough challenges:

- Today, more people require assistance from programs that provide support, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs, and unemployment insurance.
- An extensive service portfolio, from mental and behavioral health services to support for disadvantaged senior citizens, stretches the limits of infrastructure.
- Regulatory changes, such as the [Affordable Care Act](#), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), increase the task load and operational complexities of HHS agencies.
- Demographic change, especially older employees transitioning out of the workforce, means that HHS agencies need to find ways to deliver services to more people.

Microsoft for HHS

Microsoft believes that HHS agencies stand at the threshold of a unique opportunity to advance the long-held objective to integrate the delivery of services across a broad portfolio of constituents: children, families, adults, disabled, abused, uninsured, and unemployed.

Evaluate Proven Successes

Consider the successful experience of other organizations and explore the potential benefits of innovative approaches to HHS advancement.

- The [Wisconsin Health Information Exchange](#) is fulfilling a vision to improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of healthcare. “Health information exchange” refers to the process of reliable and interoperable electronic health-related information sharing conducted in a manner that protects the confidentiality, privacy, and security of the information.

Today, Wisconsin Health Information Exchange provides emergency department and clinic-based physicians and other authorized clinicians communitywide patient history, aiding optimal decision making at the time and place of care.

- The Commonwealth of Kentucky has 128 health departments/clinics and 2,000 private physician practices for its 4.2 million citizens. A common challenge at this size is providing patient medical records to multiple healthcare providers, so that doctors can provide the best possible care.

Kentucky recently created a statewide [e-Health System](#) that helped to improve administrative efficiencies, cut costs, improve patient record management, and boost access to affordable healthcare.

- Like many counties its size, Boulder County, Colorado, lacked an integrated, coordinated system to help residents apply for and receive services from more than 100 disparate agencies. This often leads to long wait times for clients to receive benefits.

To help solve the issues, [the County implemented a cloud-based collaborative social-services tool](#), reducing wait times in many cases from several weeks to a day.

Critical Considerations

Most states consider myriad situations before deciding how technology can support the agencies. Changes to processes or the technology supporting those processes should accommodate some or all of the following situations:

- Integration or close collaboration with other agencies, which require better connections between people, processes, and systems.
- Service delivery to steadily growing numbers of clients without concomitant increases in staffing or budgets.
- High-risk clients who receive multiple service benefits and require closer monitoring and guidance to forestall escalating problems and ensure service success.
- Healthcare reform legislation and other regulatory mandates that require improvements to the manageability, reliability, and efficiency of compliance.
- Adoption of the [Medicaid Information Technology Architecture \(MITA\)](#) by the [Centers for Medicaid and Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) that fosters operational integration and streamlines IT administration to improve the administration of the Medicaid program.
- Challenges of how best to rapidly respond to inquiries from elected officials or the public regarding the agency’s impact in service delivery, budgets, or regulatory compliance.
- Legacy technologies that get in the way of your agency’s work and the effectiveness of caseworkers who serve clients.

HHS Agency Success

To enhance program efficiency and improve cross-agency coordination, Boulder County, Colorado, deployed a community-based, collaborative social services solution. “The wait time for one of our programs for families in crisis went from three weeks to the same day.”

Robin Bohannon
Director of Community Services,
Boulder County

Planning Guidance

Make sure a technology solution offers the right capabilities to help everyone in the agency to improve lives and reduce costs by delivering citizen-centric care.

Enable collaboration among agencies and organizations

- **Plan a gradual strategy that can progress from one success to the next.** One or several HHS agencies can take the lead in implementing an efficient technology infrastructure for connected services that other agencies can join later on.
- **Ensure that agencies can use current data stores.** New solutions should connect with older systems so that the information residing in these systems remains available and does not have to be re-created.
- **Provide reliable access.** Keep nonprofit organizations and businesses informed by providing them with secure, reliable access.

Help caseworkers and agency managers be effective

- **Give caseworkers and agency managers a complete view of clients' service experience and progress.** By connecting systems, you can make client and service information centrally available.
- **Verify scalability for intense workloads, such as intense client traffic in large call centers.** Extend and adjust the solution to changing business needs by using industry-standard, service-oriented architectures.
- **Consider usability to keep training costs low and to ensure adoption.** Even users who don't know technology well can quickly become proficient using the tools.
- **Provide consistent service levels.** An effective solution can help you ensure that citizens receive the same quality of service regardless of the agency they are working with.

Offer streamlined, secure implementation

- **Look for flexible options for locating the solution.** You can meet your organization's needs now and in the future by implementing on-premises, deploying in the cloud, or using a hybrid approach.
- **Centralize and simplify infrastructures.** Consider a cloud environment to replace multiple data stores or think about a centralized data center, where you can use virtual servers to facilitate technology services. In the cloud or on-premises, you can also develop a central data warehouse to access databases across a variety of systems that agencies and programs use.
- **Keep confidential client information safe.** Carefully review technology providers' track records for data integrity.

Combine reasonable cost and high credibility

- **Verify the total-cost-of-ownership (TCO).** Some solutions appear reasonably priced until you need cross-agency licensing or have to hire someone to administrate the system. When you choose a solution that can handle cross-agency licensing fairly and easily, your organization's IT staff, with its limited resources, can support the technology.
- **Search for a solution provider with expertise in the public sector.** No matter which solution you choose, you will want help with deployment and continuing support from technology providers who understand public-sector and HHS agency needs.

Centralize and Standardize

"Our goal is to centralize and standardize the technology that is used within the agency and also look at leveraging technologies that could be utilized more at an enterprise level versus the program level to affect all aspects of the agency," says the Chief Technology and Compliance Officer of a midwestern state Department of Health.

Gain a Partner in Creating Sustainable Solutions

Microsoft believes that HHS agencies stand at the threshold of a unique opportunity to advance the long-held objective to integrate the delivery of services across a broad portfolio of constituents: children, families, adults, disabled, abused, uninsured, and unemployed.

The Microsoft® vision for connected HHS makes use of extensible, flexible technology to support agencies in the most efficient and coordinated services delivery, encompassing the full spectrum of services available to citizens.

Outstanding Service Quality with Extreme Resource Efficiency

In the Microsoft portfolio of effective solutions for HHS agencies, the Microsoft Dynamics® family of products, with innovative capabilities for the efficient management of complex, evolving relationships, plays a prominent role. Microsoft Dynamics CRM helps HHS agencies capitalize on the opportunity to integrate services in a way that results in better outcomes for all constituents, lowers overall costs to the taxpayers, and creates a simplified

structure to manage the many programs offered to people in need.

Accomplish Your Mission

Take advantage of your current technology investment and the simplicity and agility of the Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform to achieve your goals:

- Fully support programmatic functions of one or many agencies and the partners.
- Offer powerful collaboration tools that break down the barriers to effective communication among teams comprised of caseworkers and administrators, community agencies, educators, and family members.
- Extend the solution's functionality through nondeveloper resources and its ability to scale to meet the enterprise needs of HHS agencies.
- Provide executives with the ability to measure progress in achieving appropriate outcomes.
- Furnish agency managers, case managers, and other agency employees with efficient, role-appropriate tools to review client service profiles, deliver services effectively, and address citizens' needs.

Contact Us

- Call the Microsoft Dynamics public-sector team at 1 (888) 568-8500 or send the team an email at health@microsoft.com.
- Learn more about [Microsoft HHS Alliance partners](#).
- Find out how [governmental entities](#) and [state and local agencies](#) can acquire Microsoft Dynamics solutions.
- Read about [Microsoft Dynamics CRM in the HHS disciplines](#) and in the public sector.
- Understand Microsoft thought leadership, innovation, and technology value in such topic areas as [HHS](#), [HHS case management](#), [case collaboration](#), [HIX](#), [care coordination](#), and [Medicaid](#).

Looking for New Options

"Because the federal government is now calling for a single eligibility portal for citizens to look at healthcare plans, determine eligibility and enrollment, and assist with how the department manages cases, we are looking at new technologies, new web-type interfaces, and new technology languages that are scalable, reliable, and flexible enough to integrate components into the systems when necessary," notes the CIO of the Department of Health in one of the largest states in the country.