

# Unity@Home

A practical guide to home health technology

September 2022

## Welcome to Unity@Home the Home Health Technology Newsletter from Unity<sup>BPO</sup>



### Welcome to the Unity@Home Newsletter

At **Unity<sup>BPO</sup>** our goal is simple: to inform post-acute professionals about IT trends and solutions that lower operational costs, increase clinician productivity and satisfaction, and deliver optimal patient care efficiently.

### In This Issue

Hello UnityBPO,

If you use the Homecare Homebase EHR in your home health care agency, this issue of Unity@Home is for you. From optimizing informatics to training your remote clinical staff, UnityBPO provides HCHB users the opportunity to reduce costs, improve clinician efficiency, and improve overall patient satisfaction.

## Supplementing Your HCHB Informatics Team

### *Lowering Costs by Only Paying for What You Use*

As any agency knows, HCHB is central to providing quality patient care, accurate and timely reimbursements, and thorough documentation by clinicians. However, maintaining the system and successfully filing claims in HCHB requires an Office of Informatics team (OI), particularly for larger agencies. The OI team's responsibilities are extensive and as with all the labor shortages agencies are facing, the OI team is frequently understaffed. In 2022 staffing was the greatest challenge for 80% of home health agencies; and IT/Health Information specialists were no exception. Medical records and health information specialists are expecting a 15% increase in projected job growth by 2024, which is much higher than average.

Like any other area, agencies need to find creative ways to address their Informatics challenges. Many agencies are turning towards outsourcing, or a hybrid thereof, in reducing their staffing challenges.

An east coast agency with 15k census wanted to reduce the backlog of service requests for their Office of Informatics team. The agency chose to supplement their in-house OI team with a specialized HCHB Informatics Technician team. In this hybrid model, the agency's OI team was able to prioritize and complete 30% more of their service requests in less time by leveraging our HCHB Technician team to address specific tasks.



The agency's in-house OI team prioritized their workload and requests to address:

- PDGM Billing Management Orders (M, D, C)
- Clinical Workflow Episode Management Benefit Period/ EOB
- Interfaces/ Vendors Pathways
- Volunteer services Palliative/Private Duty Analytics Dashboards OASIS/ HIS Bereavement
- IDG
- Supplies Management Electronic Forms Assessments Payroll / Mileage
- Payor Configuration



With proper permissions in their system and a set of Authorized Requestor accounts; Unity's HCHB Informatic Technicians were able to take on simpler high volume tasks such as:

- Endstage workflow tasks
- Locked visits
- Episode and Benefit Period alignments Generate or Reset Workflow Event Stages
- Client Schedule Report Audits Almost Complete Visits Adding Facilities
- Simple Scheduling Issues Physician Profiles Merge MRN
- Visits stuck on device (LOA/ Termed) Late Recert Visits
- Transitional Recert/ Implementation Support
- Episode and Patient Attachments Building worker profile templates during Onboarding
- HCHB Authorized Requestor Escalations
- Custom inquiry research for multi-system issues

By allocating less complex HCHB issues and requests to Unity's HCHB Informatics Technicians, the agency and Unity reduced wait times to resolve HCHB issues and increased productivity for clinicians and end users. By engaging a team to supplement the Agency's in-house OI team, the agency optimized their HCHB system, increased compliance, minimized extra work, and increased reimbursement accuracy and speed.

The agency also reduced overall costs by leveraging a "pay for what you need" model rather than absorbing FTE costs. The agency's OI team saw improved morale and retention with a better work/life balance. The OI team felt comfortable partnering because of Unity's philosophy of integrating into the OI team's operational environment.

Overall, the agency kept their talented people working on issues that were affecting compliance and billing. And delegated what is simpler but still sensitive to a skilled team of HCHB informatics technicians.



# Home Health **SERVICES & TRAINING**



## Engaging A Training Partner

*Leverage Best Practices   Eliminate Staffing Challenges   Pay for What You Use*

Let's face it, EHRs tend to be all-encompassing, complex, unwieldy and hard to use. Clinician satisfaction with EHRs is generally very low and it is widely known that more than 70% of clinicians have reported health information technology-related stress. It doesn't help that a substantial number of clinicians are unable to complete their EHR documentation while at work. It goes without saying clinicians who report high or excessive time spent working in EHRs after hours at home had almost twice the risk of burnout, which we all know leads to turnover. **Some studies suggest clinicians are interacting with an EHR and peripheral clinical systems upwards of 4-5 hours during the workday and after hours.**

A recent study from KLAS' Arch Collaborative found that **EHR training is the biggest predictor of clinician satisfaction.** A better clinician experience leads to higher-quality care according to the study. And a study in the

## Better EHR Training Leads to Improved Outcomes & Clinician Satisfaction

The KLAS Study which polled more than 72,000 clinicians nationwide, found critical gaps in users' understanding of how to optimize their EHR. Adoption and clinician satisfaction is related more to how an EHR is used than to how it is designed. Simply put, **health organizations that provided better initial training and consistent refresher training — married with a micro-training approach — experienced higher clinician satisfaction, better patient outcomes, and higher clinician retention rates.**



The challenge is that current models of EHR training are limited. As EHR use has become universal in health care, organizations have typically focused on providing initial training on EHR use to clinicians. These initial training offerings typically focus on basic EHR use but do not provide opportunities to gain workflow proficiency. One study from the National Library of Medicine has suggested that 43% of clinician users considered initial EHR training to be “less than adequate” and almost 95% felt that it could be improved. [2]

The home health industry is facing sobering headwinds to include budget pressure, staffing challenges, and clinician retention. It is estimated by 2023, 44% of agencies will find their costs exceeding their revenue, and 79% of agencies view care giver shortages as having an extreme impact on their operations. Agencies must decide where to commit resources, energy and funding and no doubt the focus right now is on hiring and retaining qualified clinicians. The ROI of a “fully in-sourced” training department is constrained due to the cyclical nature of training. In fact, it's likely your full-time training resources get utilized only 50% of the time. Moving to a model where you maintain key training stakeholders while outsourcing your day-to-day training yields cost-savings because you only pay for what you need.

## Proven Training Models Lead to Higher Clinician Satisfaction

But more importantly, by providing even 4-8 more hours of training at onboarding can yield substantial productivity gains while also reducing the clinician frustration that leads to higher turnover. The addition of a pay-as-you-go instructional designer to your training team greatly improves the quality of learning materials, particularly those that are offered asynchronously.

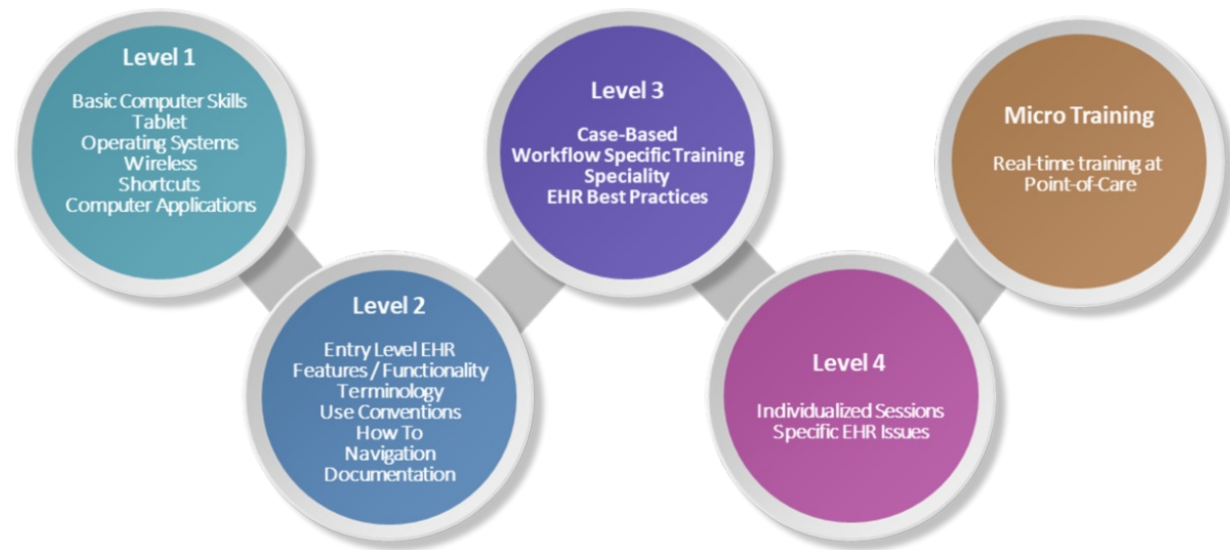
**Finding that partner who provides EHR and technical training combined— along with micro-training (training on the fly) and real-time support for new hires in the first 90 days — results in a marked improvement in retention, especially in the first 9 months.** A partner who can augment your training team is ideal, particularly for entry-level training and support.

- A surprising number of clinical end users struggle with their EHR because they lack basic “Level 1” computer skills that includes the Windows operating system.
- Beginning EHR training, “Level 2”, is an opportunity to emphasize standardized approaches to EHR while highlighting high yield optimizations.
- Level 3 training is often delivered by your in-house training team given the emphasis on clinical domains, workflows, patient safety and agency policies.
- Level 4 training is typically reserved for clinicians who are identified as needing additional assistance. This typically involves reviewing documentation, documenting a visit, completing orders or even “how-to” reviews.



Now is the time for agencies to get creative, outsourcing parts of your training and even technology support will lower your costs while dramatically improving onboarding and clinician satisfaction.

1. <https://klasresearch.com/archcollaborative/report/global-ehr-satisfaction-2022/422>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8491113/>



**Learn More About Home Care Home Base EHR Training**

# Home Health FAST FACTS



Home health agencies are reducing live agent calls with scheduling automation and exploring lowering re-admission risks via AI technology.

**93% of senior level health care professionals worldwide** said that automation of processes accelerated because of COVID-19...and **57% are taking the opportunity to build new, automated processes** to improve the way they interact with patients.

(Healthcare IT News)



New nurses in the field require **service desk support on average 8-10 times per month because they need help with technology.**

Providing technical assistance early on gives new hire nurses the support they need at a critical time in their onboarding.

(Unity<sup>SM</sup>)

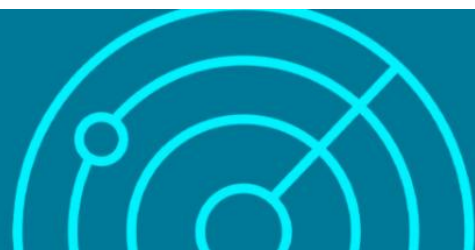


Agencies can free up staff time and reduce manual effort through automations that improve your bottom line.

Automated asset management **reduces the need for IT headcount by 70%** in mid-sized home health agencies.

(Unity<sup>SM</sup>)

## On Our RADAR



**Leveraging the cloud and AI to transform the patient experience**

AI enables healthcare organizations to quickly scale their staff with a "digital workforce" that can handle simple interactions, such as booking an appointment or refilling a prescription 24/7. Patients love this because they can complete these tasks without having to find time in their busy day to call their provider and wait in a call queue.

AI-assisted self-service channels allow patients to engage in their own patient access workflows efficiently and receive proactive communication to update them on their journey. Using AI to communicate more proactively with patients helps organizations support increased call volumes, as well.

[Healthcare IT News](#)

## Home-Based Care Providers Are Raising Expectations for Their Technology Partners

Home-based care providers looking to grow, or even just to survive, are increasingly turning to technology to do so. A major part of that is EHRs. And currently, providers are generally unsatisfied with their EHR vendor relationships. Providers, more than anything, want more customer support, ongoing education and training from their EHR vendors.

[Home Health Care News](#)

## What is IT-as-a-Service (ITaaS)?

IT-as-a-Service can be a game changer for healthcare practices. With less time spent managing servers, storage, IT vendors, and troubleshooting user issues, you'll have more time to focus on your patients.... You've likely heard of Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS), Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), or the most common, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). These services center around the concept of consumption-based computing. The number of users, storage utilization or compute required are generally factors that affect as-a-service models.

ITaaS helps speed the delivery and support of essential business, clinical, and IT services to clinicians and administrators across the healthcare organization, providing significant value to the entire enterprise.... ITaaS helps lower operational costs restructure costs from capital to operating expenses, improve service levels, and accelerate deployment of key healthcare applications. The benefits of ITaaS for home health care agencies include:

- Efficiency
- Automation
- Accountability
- Visibility
- Reduced Costs
- Increased Mobility
- Improved Data and Privacy Protection
- Enhanced Security
- Maintain Compliance
- Interoperability

[Health IT Answers](#)



# Land of ENCHANTMENT

Unity<sup>BPO</sup> is proud to call New Mexico home. The spiritual essence of Unity is grounded in the culture, diversity, traditions and the beautifully rugged landscape of this land. As the 6<sup>th</sup> most diverse state in the country, with over 30 cultures including 23 Native American Communities our talented team draws inspiration, sensitivity, patience

and compassion from this convergence of enchanting humanity. Our employees live, work, and play all across this breathtaking Land of Enchantment. Here's a few of the amazing events we'll be participating in this month.



### **Burn Your Sorrows Away at Zozobra**

Held every second week of September, Fiestas de Santa Fe celebrates Hispanic and Native American culture. The festival starts with the Novena masses and the procession of La Conquistadora to Rosario Chapel. Then, the event will proceed to the burning of Zozobra, a 15-meter-tall (50-feet) marionette that represents the people's hardships and sorrows over the past year. A three-day celebration then follows, which is composed of a parade, thanksgiving masses, and the fiesta ball. Throughout the event, booths are set up throughout the area, with vendors selling all kinds of items ranging from arts and crafts to food and clothing. For more information, visit <https://burnzozobra.com/>.

### **Spice it up at the Hatch Chile Festival**

In early fall, New Mexico is hot stuff. We're not talking about the weather. We're talking about our delicious, very spicy, and renowned hatch green chili. Celebrating the chili harvest of New Mexico, Hatch Chile Festival is a fun event that attracts more than 30,000 visitors, making it one of the biggest chili events in America. Various activities are held at the festival, including Squeezie Chile Raffle, corn hole team tournament, and various live performances. There are also vendors selling local crafts, food, and of course, chili. Bring on the heat! For more information, visit <https://hatchchilefestival.org/>.



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Our goal is simple: to inform post-acute professionals about IT trends and solutions that lower operational costs, increase clinician productivity and satisfaction, or deliver optimal patient care efficiently. We encourage you to share your feedback with us by clicking below. Please share this with your colleagues to subscribe.

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