

Unity@Home

A practical guide to home health technology

November 2022

Welcome to Unity@Home
the Home Health Technology
Newsletter from Unity^{BPO}



Welcome to the Unity@Home Newsletter

At [Unity^{BPO}](#) 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.

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In This Issue

Hello UnityBPO,

In this issue of Unity@Home, we explore how your agency can best prepare for CMS value-based purchasing, consolidate technology support to reduce costs, and utilize implementation support planning to ease the execution of technology change.

The Home Health industry is gearing up for more CMS reimbursement changes, how can your agency prepare for CMS Value Based Purchasing and stay in business?

For more than a decade, the healthcare industry has been struggling to operationalize and optimize their electronic health records for compliance. These changes, driven by the Federal government, were the catalyst that began the journey of cost reduction and transparency in healthcare. Wherever you fall on the spectrum as an allied health provider or other end user, your interactions with technology now take about 75% of your time. In a fee for service industry, moving to a standardized mode of delivery of data to improve compliance alignment was instrumental in moving a laggard industry forward. So where are you today in the maturity and use of your workflows? How are you preparing your teams to meet the expanded [Home Health Value Based Purchasing \(HHVBP\) rules starting January, 2023](#)? Joint Commission is out making the rounds to catch up post pandemic -- Are you prepared? Have you recently been visited by the Joint Commission and didn't quite get the outcomes you expected?

A good place to start is with an audit of your environment. A "start somewhere and go everywhere" auditing approach when reviewing and assessing current workflows with an independent lens can prove to be vital to uncover opportunities for improvement.

An independent audit of your environment will:

1. Find gaps in your processes
2. Validate existing processes
3. Create opportunity to correct broken processes and new processes where needed
4. Identify gaps in data that can support or inform decisions to improve outcomes

Start somewhere and go everywhere -(a favorite phrase of ours from a data evangelist)
The collection of data is necessary for reimbursement, if it's not collected or input in the same way each time, every time, your organization can fall behind on receiving federal reimbursements, and/or delay payments from commercial payers. Where and how data is captured is vital. You may already be thinking, "We are collecting a lot of data now as it is" but do you know that it's valid, or how to make sense of it and put it to use? What does your Audit Practice look like? Is it done ad hoc, just in time, or do you have a rigorous program in place?

A well-rounded audit practice includes one or more team members that have worked in various roles within healthcare delivery and back office- *adding in a user experience designer will just speed up the output even faster*- preferably the team should include a provider or clinician and potentially an administrative team member.

This type of team has the information from point of care to billing that can ferret out gaps or inconsistencies in data collection and reporting. Experience matters in aligning perceived workflows and processes to actual processes to pass compliance audits and support getting expected reimbursements. Auditing does take time and an investment upfront, but is nominal compared to the loss of reimbursements after the fact. A solid audit practice can find other opportunities to support your end users, whether finding opportunities to speed up data input by reducing end user time spent entering data (an end user satisfier) to improving the speed of payment or reimbursement (important to CFO's and company viability), auditing your systems for gaps in financial or operational workflow processes makes good business sense.

Steps to get going:

1. **First:** identify your audit stakeholders and what types of gaps or anomalies in processes they will look for - *a foundational step in fixing data gaps.*
2. **Second:** make a plan to educate or re-educate workforce staff, i.e., continual training to reinforce workflow processes and standardized data (i.e., codes, notes, documentation) can greatly reduce claim denials and payment delays.
3. **Third:** identify, establish and measure success metrics. Big goals can be accomplished by setting small goals along the way. E.g. if an organization carries 15% or more in unreimbursed payments, set an improvement goal to reduce that by 1% within 60 days. Tweak changes in your processes along the way if you don't start seeing improvement.

If you are ready to prepare for HHVBP, a joint commission visit or remediate audit findings but are too stretched to start an internal audit practice today we are here to help.

Reduce Costs and Improve Staff Retention by Consolidating Technology Support

Home health agencies frequently separate technical and EHR support – IT provides technical services and Clinical Informatics provides EHR support. But agencies are seeking more creative approaches to both support their employees and find cost savings.

LOOK FOR A “No Wrong Door” Philosophy

No Wrong Door means it doesn't matter what kind of call it is—the service desk should answer and help the caller. Vendors who partner with Post-Acute agencies know that when clinicians need help, they need help now, and your clinician wants to make only one call to one number. You must answer that call. Experienced analysts resolve your staff's and clinicians' issues with HCHB and other applications and hardware such as printers and tablets. Any calls outside the analysts' purview are warm-transferred to Tier 2, HR, Facilities, Billing, third-party vendors, etc. But good analysts always answer the call!

For clinicians, always having the call answered is critical. Our analysts have helped clinicians when they've been in traffic accidents, lost their tablets, or need a visit rescheduled. We are their lifeline to assistance when they are out in the field on their own.

Consequently, larger home health agencies are consolidating their IT and clinical support desks into a single service desk under a managed services vendor in order to reduce costs, meet operational challenges, remain competitive, and enhance their clinicians' and staff's experience with their IT support. An integrated clinical and technical applications service desk underpinned by a robust ITSM platform handles not only the EHR Tiers 1–3 support (like Homecare Homebase (HCHB)), but also Tiers 1 and 2 technical incidents and requests from both clinicians and back-office staff. Managed Service vendors bring technical and clinical support experience with applicable technologies and services that will aid Home Health Agencies in achieving the economies of scale offered by a secure integrated Healthcare Information Technology (HIT) support solution.

A consolidated service center addresses the needs of clinicians, back-office staff, and the IT team, generating high-quality Tier 1 and Tier 2 technical and EHR support so that staff and clinicians spend less time waiting for technology issues to be resolved and more time focused on patient care.

Managed HIT support services create significant value for Home Health Agencies including:

- **Increased clinician satisfaction** -- 96% -- with support services that leads to lower clinician turnover, reduced burnout, and fewer escalated calls to internal leadership
- **Resolving upwards of 80%** of technical and EHR incidents and requests
- **Reduced call volume every year by over 12%** through the use of analytics and trend data to create proactive fixes
- **Improved clinician experience**—clinicians feel “supported” thus increasing retention and professional satisfaction
- **Reduced defects in the environment** so there are fewer problems for clinicians and staff
- **Work driven to the lowest cost point** with the fastest resolution
- **Transformation** of how support is delivered by recommending more automation, best practices, and process changes
- **Faster resolution times** allowing clinicians and staff to focus on patient care
- **Reduced downtime** allowing clinicians to remain productive and billable.

Consolidated service desks improve standardization and response times across an enterprise. Progressive agencies are seeing the service desk as the bridge for gaps in productivity and training for employees to enable them to maximize workplace efficiency. Many agencies are rethinking how they handle service and support, viewing the service desk as a foundation for efficiently meeting the needs of the business and supporting growth. The Technology service desk has become a mission-critical foundation for how agencies enable clinicians and back-office employees as well as how efficiently an agency functions.

Home Health **SERVICES & TRAINING**



Agencies Make Technology Transformations Successful with Comprehensive Implementation Support

Rolling out a new “transformational” technology is disruptive to an organization’s harmony and daily operations. And having a new technology isn’t the only factor for success because transformation doesn’t just happen by chance. Simply adding in new technology without a comprehensive implementation strategy and plan is just adding new tech onto old tech, which will just result in making your “transformed” organization a “more costly” organization. Combining new technology with an organized implementation plan and team will support the success of any transformation.

What is Implementation: Implementation is the process of putting a decision or plan into effect – it's the definition of "execution". Why is a comprehensive implementation support plan so important to any implementation of technology or software?

To execute jointly with your organization to achieve sustainable results, a knowledgeable implementation support partner should understand your agency's key issues and design integrated solutions that solve those issues.

Implementations are the most exciting, and at the same time, the most difficult part of any technology transformation process. This is not to understate the importance of implementation, as a successful business implementation links performance factors with projects designed to develop and optimize individual and departmental activities.

For implementations to be successful, executive leadership and management must be fully committed to incorporate the costs that drive comprehensive adoption of a new technology, such as training, auditing of current state processes, etc. as part of the implementation and operationalization budget. For a successful implementation, structured project management, full transparency, and buy-in from users at every level of the organization is a must for success.

Successful agencies develop, or engage expertise, a comprehensive implementation support plan for any "new innovative technology" they roll into their organizations.

UnityBPO can prepare your organization to engage with new technology in powerful ways, and then guide your implementation from start to finish.

Services we Provide:

- Technology readiness assessment
- Technology adoption campaigns
- IT Project Management
- EHR and Technology Training
- 24/7 command center support

[Learn More About Implementation Services](#)

Home Health
FAST FACTS





Agency owners who offer both ongoing and orientation training see a **\$700,000** increase in revenue.



42% of home health care agencies project value-based contracts will account for more than half or most of their organization's revenue in the next 3-5 years.



Over 90% of family caregivers claimed that the method a hospice uses to communicate influences their overall satisfaction.

On Our **RADAR**



November is National Home Care and Hospice Month

Each November, the home care and hospice community honors the millions of nurses, home care aides, therapists, and social workers who make a remarkable difference for the patients and families they serve. These heroic caregivers play a central role in our health care system and in homes across the nation. To recognize their efforts, we join the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) in celebrating November as National Home Care & Hospice Month.

National Association for Home Care and Hospice

UAMS Announces a Partnership with Amedisys and Contessa

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Amedisys, and Contessa announced a partnership bringing a new care at home option to Central Arkansas. [UAMS News](#)

Land of **ENCHANTMENT**

Unity^{BPO} 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 6th 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.



Take Flight at the Festival of the Cranes

If you're into bird watching, this is a must-see event! Located in San Antonio, Socorro County, at the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge, the Festival of the Cranes celebrates the cranes as they return to their winter home. The event is known to be one of the top wildlife events in North America. People who are interested in birds, other wild animals, and photography will surely enjoy the event. The festival will be hosting over 134 events in just four days. These include photography contests, multiple live performances, workshops, and special tours that will lead visitors to places that were previously not accessible. For more information, visit <https://friendsofbosquedelapache.org/festival/>.

Explore Hispanic Culture at the Winter Spanish Market

The annual Winter Spanish Market takes place late each November in Albuquerque. With well over 100 of the finest artists who embrace the traditional Spanish Colonial arts participating, visitors can expect to see santos, tinwork, straw appliqué, weaving, pottery, precious metal, colcha, bone carving, furniture, woodcarving and utilitarian objects, all traditions endorsed by Spanish Colonial Arts of New Mexico.

Several live demonstrations by some of the artists will be offered, and visitors will have the opportunity to meet and talk with the artists throughout the event. On Friday night before the weekend market, the Society sponsors Preview which honors the awards recipients and offers collectors and visitors a sneak peak of the best artwork that will be for sale the next day.

In addition to the Spanish Market artist sales booths, there is entertainment on the bandstand with regional Hispanic bands and dance groups, art demonstration booths, book sales booths, and food booths that complement this heritage event. For more information, visit <https://www.spanishcolonial.org/spanish-market-detail/>.

Winter Indian Market®

Did you know that Santa Fe is America's oldest capital? If you are planning a visit to the "City Different," check out the The Annual Winter Indian Market® held every Thanksgiving weekend at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico. A smaller, more intimate version of summer Santa Fe Indian Market®, Winter Indian Market® is held during Santa Fe's magical winter season. Winter Indian Market® gives visitors an opportunity to spend time interacting with their favorite artists and the opportunity to discover new ones. For more information, visit <https://swaia.org/>.



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