Integrated care is key when operating as an FQHC

SUCCESS STORY **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, FQHC**

At a glance

Community
◉ Behavioral Health, FQHC

Organization
◉ COMTREA Health Center

Location
◉ Jefferson County, Missouri

Challenges
◉ Using multiple disparate solutions between behavioral health and primary care services
◉ Lack of integrated care across services
◉ Cumbersome intake and referral process

Solution
◉ myAvatar™
◉ CarePOV™ Medical Note

Results
◉ A single shared health record to help achieve true care coordination
◉ Ability to make more informed decisions at the point of care
◉ Greater efficiencies, smoother workflows

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COMTREA adopts integrated EHR for more seamless care coordination

About COMTREA

COMTREA serves as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), primarily operating in Jefferson County, Missouri, while reaching more than 10 surrounding counties. With more than 45 years of services, the organization has helped thousands of individuals in their care journey, ranging from primary care, dental services and behavioral health care, among others. COMTREA strives to offer accessible and affordable care to their communities and empowers individuals to seek stability through necessary care and resources.

The need for a single, integrated solution

As an FQHC, COMTREA Health Center knows the importance of integrated care and the value of having all of their services lines in one electronic health record (EHR). COMTREA offers a variety of services including primary care, dental, behavioral health services including mental health, psychiatry, substance use, community education and advocacy, as well as community services including domestic violence and children's advocacy. With these vast services lines, having one electronic platform is vital.

For more than five years, the Missouri-based community treatment organization tried to use their primary care EHR for their behavioral health workflows. As is often the case, primary care solutions are not designed to meet the unique requirements of behavioral health.

In addition to not having a platform designed to meet their behavioral health needs, COMTREA was using multiple disparate solutions, which led to one side of their organization not knowing how the other side was handling the individual's care, ultimately causing a disruption in

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Vice President of IT

client care. This siloed approach impacted efficiencies because providers were required to utilize two disparate solutions while providing care. COMTREA set out to find a new technology partner who could incorporate all service lines into a single platform and meet their FQHC requirements.

"It was really important for us to have one shared record and one source of treatment information," Vice President of IT, Andrea Cuneio, said. "We wanted to easily coordinate care without duplicating efforts. Having staff use the same technology at each office, whether it's primary care or behavioral health, was a huge driver for us."

COMTREA provides integrated primary care and behavioral health services to nearly 700 patients, in addition to the 38,000 primary care patients seen annually. Given this incredible volume, it is evident why an integrated platform was crucial.

"Prior to our partnership with Netsmart, our intake and referral processes were cumbersome. Due to large client volumes and disparate systems, providers were having to refer from a variety of different screens with a centralized admissions department working out of two EHRs," Cuneio said. "Our providers didn't have the ability to seamlessly share information, which created inefficiencies and perpetuated silos. It was so easy for staff to miss things. The systems didn't talk to each other, and it really, really kept us in the silos."

Finding partnership with Netsmart

After partnering with Netsmart, COMTREA now uses the myAvatar EHR for integrated care. One platform to view lab results, current medications, vitals, allergies and more recently women's health history, payment information and internal referrals. This true integrated care view empowers providers to make more informed decisions at the point on care.

COMTREA also uses CarePOV Medical Note, a Netsmart platform, which enables prescribers and providers to rapidly document evaluation and management (E&M) visits, wellness visits and the American Academy of Pediatrics Association Bright Futures guidelines, providing a comprehensive view of the individual's health information at their fingertips. This supports National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) accreditation.

"We worked closely with Netsmart regarding our PCMH certification and accreditation and were able to get recommendations regarding the easiest way to meet some of these guidelines," Cuneio said. "We just submitted our recertification application and felt really great about the application."

With the adoption of the single platform for their service lines, COMTREA has been able to create more efficiencies and smoother workflows. Through their continued partnership, COMTREA and Netsmart worked together to create additional ways to simplify documentation.

"One example that comes to mind is when we worked with product management to enhance our existing workflow by displaying data from another part of the EHR which was deemed critical by our team," Cuneio said. "This one enhancement made our staff's day because it simplified the documentation process even further."

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Looking ahead

COMTREA plans to grow not only as an FQHC but as a quality healthcare provider despite external challenges. COVID-19 has altered care delivery for most care organizations, and COMTREA is continuing to evolve and move forward safely and effectively. Through integrated care, data sharing and technology partnership, COMTREA plans to continue serving their communities in any way they can, making sure they see as many people as possible regardless of care setting.

Learn more about Netsmart clients at: www.ntst.com/Hear-from-clients

About Netsmart

Netsmart designs, builds and delivers electronic health records (EHRs), solutions and services that are powerful, intuitive and easy-to-use.

Our platform provides accurate, up-to-date information that is easily accessible to care team members in behavioral health, home care, senior living and social services. We make the complex simple and personalized so our clients can concentrate on what they do best: provide services and treatment that support whole-person care.

By leveraging the powerful Netsmart network, care providers can seamlessly and securely integrate information across communities, collaborate on the most effective treatments and improve outcomes for those in their care. Our streamlined systems and personalized workflows put relevant information at the fingertips of users when and where they need it.

For more than 50 years, Netsmart has been committed to providing a common platform to integrate care.