

A secure, compliant and reliable new home for invaluable data

SUCCESS STORY HUMAN SERVICES



At a glance

Community

- Human Services

Organization

- Henderson Behavioral Health

Location

- South Florida

Challenges

- Maintaining optimal EHR performance
- Bandwidth to support other technology and business priorities
- Securing a mobile workforce

Solution

- myAvatar™
- Netsmart Plexus™ Cloud

Results

- Time savings equivalent to .75 of full-time employee
- Ability to implement additional solutions to enhance care delivery
- Improved security and performance

Henderson Behavioral Health transitions from self-hosting to Plexus Cloud

About Henderson Behavioral Health

Since 1953, Henderson Behavioral Health has been providing healthcare, housing and hope for more than 30,000 individuals with behavioral health conditions. Services range from 24-hour crisis services, psychosocial rehabilitation, primary health care integrated into behavioral health care programs, transitional housing and more. Henderson serves, uplifts and advocates for all of their clients, believing everyone contributes to society and deserves the opportunity to live a life of value, self-respect, compassion and dignity.

As the oldest and largest nonprofit recovery services provider in south Florida, Henderson needs technology that is efficient, compliant and secure. For the past 10 years, Henderson was self-hosting the Netsmart myAvatar electronic health record (EHR). While the CareRecord™ met their clinical needs, self-hosting often brought some in-house IT issues that made it difficult to fully leverage the platform.

Aiming to better optimize the EHR, expand additional Netsmart solutions and allow Henderson IT staff to focus on projects that drive staff satisfaction and care initiatives, the organization transitioned hosting responsibilities to Netsmart Cloud Hosting in early 2021.

“While we’ve always had a good working relationship with Netsmart when self-hosted, we spent majority of our time keeping the servers running optimally,” Chief Information Officer, Tony Cox, said. “Plus, everyone knows the cloud is the future, so it was time for us to make this change with Netsmart.”

“Now are we not only relieved of a lot of the difficulties self-hosting can bring, but we can explore other Netsmart modules and services that we didn’t have the bandwidth to pursue before.”

Tony Cox
Chief Information Officer, Henderson Behavioral Health

Transitioning to Plexus Cloud

Netsmart hosts, manages and protects data in a HIPAA-compliant data center staffed by cloud and Netsmart solution experts. The hosting service reduces risk of data breaches and cyberattacks while offering 24/7 data availability backed by service level agreement.

Before transitioning to Plexus Cloud, a single full-time Henderson employee was initially responsible for all of the myAvatar servers, including installments, patches, quarterly updates and coordinating with the Netsmart team. These in-house hosting duties occupied nearly 75% of his time. By transitioning to cloud hosting, Henderson hopes to both alleviate any performance issues and give their IT staff some much needed time back to focus on other business priorities.

“As we work through the transition over these next several months, our hope is to get 75% percent of that employee’s time back,” Cox said. “That will allow our IT staff to solely focus on other important responsibilities and not spend so much time maintaining infrastructure and performance.”

Exploring additional solutions

In addition to time savings, shifting to Plexus Cloud allows Henderson to more efficiently pursue other technology solutions within the Netsmart portfolio, including the next generation of myAvatar. While they were aware of services and add-ons that could enhance their care delivery, the behavioral health organization didn’t have the capacity or time to actively support any new functionality.

“Moving to cloud-based hosting ushered in a new kind of relationship between Henderson and Netsmart,” Cox said. “Now are we not only relieved of a lot of the difficulties self-hosting can bring, but we can explore other Netsmart modules and services that we didn’t have the bandwidth to pursue before.”

Henderson is looking forward to implementing other Netsmart cloud-optimized technologies such as OrderEntry, eMAR, ScriptLink, multi-factor authentication and more. The additional functionality

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will help providers become more efficient with simplified and integrated workflows within the solution while also boosting security.

“We are so pleased to have moved our CareRecord to a Netsmart hosted solution,” Chief Executive Officer, Steven Ronik Ed.D said. “It optimizes performance and frees-up more internal resources.”

Keeping security top of mind

With remote working, virtual care and mobility continuing to be a hot topic in light of COVID-19, Henderson needed to ensure their cloud-hosted EHR was protected and secure from cyber threats. Keeping data and health information safe is imperative, especially when EHR users are accessing the platform in outside or remote settings.

Netsmart Cloud Hosting allows Henderson staff to log in from wherever they are working. While convenient and compliant, open access can “add some holes to the swiss cheese of security,” Cox said. With providers able to access the EHR from anywhere with internet connectivity, multi-factor authentication within myAvatar ensures the records and documentation are highly secure from compromised user credentials.

“Netsmart has the ability to build that defense, allowing us to leverage the technology from anywhere in the world while getting that security of multi-factor authentication,” Cox said. “With Netsmart assistance, we are much more confident in the security outcomes.”

Transitioning to cloud hosting?

Cox said one of their biggest lessons learned in this process was all of the customizations they did to myAvatar early on in the partnership with Netsmart. When preparing to go hosted, he advises providers identify and understand the configurations of their EHR.

Provider organizations may have established customizations within the EHR, which need to be tested with the hosted platform. Noting what those unique configurations are before transitioning to hosted can help the migration process run more seamlessly. This will provide a smooth experience for your end users if the items or workflows they leveraged work the same or better as before. Often times, small glitches are common in these transitions. If there are issues during or after the migration process, providers should ensure their hosting partner is made aware to avoid delay.

“With projects like this, things rarely go as planned, but the Netsmart team really stepped up to make sure issues were resolved immediately,” EHR System Support Specialist, Zachary Sibio, said.

“Any outstanding items were quickly transitioned to the appropriate team via ticket or follow up. As a result, issues were taken care of fast and with minimal detriment to the project.”

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Overall, the transition process should be simple and quick.

“The day we switched from self-hosted to hosted was fabulous,” Cox said. “Netsmart took care of everything. We didn’t have to do anything more than tell everyone we were doing it and then test it when it was ready.”

Learn more about Netsmart clients at
www.ntst.com/Resources-and-Insights/Success-Stories

About Netsmart

Netsmart Cloud Hosting focuses on security, availability and performance. Our healthcare hosting environment simplifies maintenance and upgrades while maintaining redundancy to keep systems available in the event of a device failure. We are SSAE 18-compliant and are audited by a third-party on all security/compliance controls, and we meet or exceed all HIPAA requirements for storing PHI data.

Our 24/7 data availability is guaranteed by service level agreements, and we update and maintain operating systems, databases and application software through our healthcare cloud services. In addition, we offer platform as a service (PaaS) capabilities to host all your business applications.