

GlobalSearch® Helps Nurses Care for the Intellectually Disabled

For more than 18 years, Dimensional Health Care Associates, Inc. (DHCA) in Owings Mills, Maryland has provided nurse case management, delegated nursing, nutrition assessment and training services to organizations providing care for intellectually disabled individuals in compliance with local, state and federal regulations.

DHCA was founded in the early 1990s, a time when individuals with intellectual disabilities were leaving institutional care in large numbers. "After these individuals were de-institutionalized, many did not receive the medical care they needed, often with tragic consequences," said Denise Schuffman, CEO of DHCA and a registered nurse and dietitian. "In response to these circumstances, laws were enacted mandating nursing oversight for these people," she said. Schuffman and her husband, Howard, who is also a registered nurse, founded DHCA in response to these challenges.

"DHCA is nurse owned and operated," Schuffman explained. "Our nurses care for thousands of individuals with disabilities ranging from simple, mild intellectual disabilities to severe cases with complex medical requirements. Our training programs teach the special skills caregivers require to care for intellectually disabled people, and our dietitians provide nutrition services. We serve as an advocate for individuals with intellectual disabilities, making sure everyone gets the services they deserve and need."

After nearly two decades of growth, a swelling roster of 30 nurses and an ever-expanding collection of paper files that were consuming expensive office space, Schuffman concluded that DHCA needed an Electronic Content Management system. But the system not only had to be affordable, it had to be simple enough to be easily mastered by nurses who were frequently uncomfortable with computers. As DHCA lacked IT personnel, it also had to be very easy to maintain and be compatible with the organization's existing Microsoft Access database.

"GlobalSearch has proven to be an ideal solution for DHCA," Schuffman said. "It helped us to eliminate our dependence on cumbersome paper records and enabled us to streamline our workflows. *Using GlobalSearch, our nurses can quickly and effortlessly*

Snapshot

Industry:
Healthcare

Departments Impacted:
Nurse Case Management and Training

Featured Products:
GlobalSearch

Objectives:
Eliminate cumbersome paper-based filing system; enable quick and easy document access by field nurses; ensure regulatory compliance; reclaim valuable storage space; streamline business processes to achieve greater efficiency, productivity and savings

access client records while in the field so their individuals receive the best and safest care possible. And GlobalSearch quickly paid for itself. I estimate that by using GlobalSearch, we are saving more than \$70,000 annually in labor and office space."

70k
Saved
Annually 

"GlobalSearch also ensures that DHCA is in full compliance with all applicable regulations," Schuffman continued. "This is highly desirable in a specialized, statute-driven medical environment. The caregivers must receive special government-mandated training, so we conduct a lot of training programs and in-service sessions. GlobalSearch helps us to document this training activity."

DHCA
Compliant 

As in most medical environments today, DHCA's work processes are extremely document-intensive. Each day, the organization receives an unending stream of documents including appointment information, physicians' orders, lab results and training records. Most of these arrive in the form of faxes of up to 50 pages in length—some containing information on as many as 20 different individuals—from which multiple types of raw data must be manually extracted and filed.

Before GlobalSearch, these paper records would change hands multiple times as they were reviewed and processed before being permanently filed. "The paper records traveled from desk to desk and from person to person for up to six weeks," Schuffman said. "That's quite a lot of moving paper!"

Today, with GlobalSearch, DCHA enjoys streamlined workflows. Faxes are received electronically, eliminating the need to print them. After a quick review to identify any urgent material, the records are routed directly into a GlobalSearch Inbox. They are then promptly indexed into customized GlobalSearch Archives and are instantly accessible by others—wherever they may be. A growing number of records now arrive via e-mail, further contributing to automation.

"We're never behind with filing, because there's never any paper to file!" Schuffman said. "Our nurses really love GlobalSearch because they can access records with a notebook computer in the field and don't have to come into the office to get documents or carry large binders around with them. GlobalSearch also gives me administrative oversight and the ability to check on the status of work in progress."

After using GlobalSearch for one year, Schuffman saw a quick and sizeable return on her technology investment. "I estimate that the efficiency we gained using GlobalSearch is saving labor costs equivalent to the burdened annual salary of one full-time employee—about \$50,000 annually," Schuffman said.

"Also, by not having to store paper records we have reclaimed 1,000 square feet of Class-A office space worth about \$20,000 annually. This space will be used for revenue producing activities like new training programs."

"I would definitely recommend GlobalSearch!" Schuffman concluded. "GlobalSearch allowed us to make a quantum leap toward greater efficiency and organization and we aren't even using the solution to its full potential yet. We will be using GlobalSearch to automate our workflows even more fully in the future. In the meantime, all of us have benefitted enormously from using GlobalSearch: our staff, our nurses, our customers and, most importantly, the individuals we serve."

An icon of a money bag with a dollar sign inside, representing savings.

50k
Saved In
Labor Costs