

Case Study



BlackBerry Smartphones: Mobilizing the Delivery of Home Care Services

Company: We Care Home Health Services is a large independently owned home care services provider in Canada, with more than 50 community locations and 5,000 staff.

Industry: Health Care

Region: Americas

Company Size: Large Enterprise
– 5,000 employees

Email Environment: Microsoft® Exchange

Type of Solution: Field Service, CRM & Dispatch Operations

BlackBerry Alliance Member Solution: MedShare™ for BlackBerry by MedShare

Challenge: We Care Home Health Services wanted to replace the paper-driven system it used for the administrative processes that personal support workers and nurses used to confirm their visits with home care clients and send this information to their local office.

Solution: Working with MedShare, a wireless application partner, the company deployed the MedShare for BlackBerry application on several BlackBerry® smartphones. The application helped to confirm care workers' shifts, keep track of client information and almost instantly send completed timesheets into the company's Procura back-end billing and payroll system.

We Care's Results:

- 25% reduction in scheduling calls
- Streamlined administration
- Better reporting
- More connected, happier staff with company loyalty



The Challenge: Connect Care Workers at the Point of Care

We Care Home Health Services manages a workforce of nearly 5,000 people across the country. These nurses, personal support workers and other support staff visit the homes of the sick, frail or elderly and help them with their daily living activities and care.

The challenge was that personal support workers, nurses and other support staff are highly mobile and work in virtual isolation with their clients. Very few of them had cell phones, so it wasn't easy to stay in touch with them on the job. Visits had to be confirmed by phone and timesheets were all done by hand and entered into the system manually.

"We were using an archaic way of tracking our staff's time in the field," says John Schram, CEO. "They basically filled out timesheets every week, confirming their visits to clients' homes, and sent them back to us, where the information had to be re-input for payroll and billing."

We Care wanted to replace their paper-based, phone-driven Scheduling and Time and Attendance system. They hoped an automated approach that would help schedule visits, and electronically record the visits, could be linked to their Procura back-end system to streamline their administrative processes.

Why the BlackBerry Solution?

As the CEO, John Schram was already using the BlackBerry smartphone, as was many business staff in the company. With the BlackBerry solution already in place, it seemed wise to build on their investment by broadening their deployment to field personnel.

"I've used the BlackBerry smartphone for many years," he says. "It's easy to use and is a widespread choice among many companies. It was an easy choice for us to move forward with it for this project."

User-friendliness needed to be a critical part of any technology selected for this project. Many personal support workers are not used to technology; in fact, only a few of them had ever used a cell phone, and almost none had used a computer. Any smartphone or mobile application deployed had to be easy to pick up and unintimidating.

For that reason, Branch Director, Janna Chindamo, who heads up the test group, specifically chose to pilot the project with some care workers who had never used technology like this before.

"It opened up a whole world for many of our staff, who began sending emails for the first time," says Chindamo. "It was really surprising how quickly they learned how to use the device, and even the application, with minimal training."

"We hope that within a two-year period we can deploy the MedShare for BlackBerry solution to our 5,000 plus staff across the country and, among other benefits, cut our administrative time and effort by 25% to 50%."

~ JOHN SCHRAM, CEO, We Care Home Health Services

Partner Profile:



Company: MedShare

- A software company providing electronic agency management and e-health record solutions designed to meet the business and clinical needs of home health care agencies

Featured Product: MedShare for BlackBerry

Application Type: Field Service, CRM & Dispatch Operations

"MedShare had a number of applications that were interesting to us, but when we explained our core needs, they immediately worked with us to transform our inefficient paper based Time and Attendance system. Now we are effectively using the BlackBerry smartphone and electronic business processes."

~ **John Schram**, CEO, We Care Home Health Services

For more information, visit www.medshare.com



Alliance Member

Improving Administration and Clinical Care

We Care deployed MedShare for BlackBerry, an application for BlackBerry smartphones to automate their Time and Attendance system. The entire process of scheduling client visits, charting the visit and logging time into timesheets was done, on the spot, during a client visit, with the BlackBerry smartphone. That meant that virtually all paperwork was eliminated from the process.

The first big change was an almost 25% reduction in calls between care coordinators, who schedule time, and personal support workers. Instead of having to make 25 or more calls to a group of care workers to check their availability and wait for a response, the MedShare for BlackBerry application sends out a group email to each person's BlackBerry smartphone.

"In one business week alone, our care coordinators cut the number of calls from 145 to 72, because our personal support workers now accept the shifts on their BlackBerry smartphone," says Chindamo. "This is a huge benefit to our staff and clients because we can confirm schedules almost immediately instead of having to wait for hours."

The other change was getting Time and Attendance in near-real-time. As soon as a personal support worker arrives at a location, they use the MedShare for BlackBerry application to confirm their arrival. When they leave, they log their time, which is almost automatically sent to the Procura point of care system.

"We completely eliminated the middle step of having to wait for timesheets to be dropped off and then have someone manually input them into our Procura system," says Chindamo. "It's now immediately recorded via the BlackBerry solution. Instead of being days to a week behind, we keep up with our payroll and billing, which is important to our business."

The personal support workers also use the MedShare for BlackBerry application to log basic chart information. If a client has an incident, which can range from mobility, cognitive or medication troubles, the care giver can log the information into the chart section.

"Knowing about incidents is important to allow us to provide quality service," says Chindamo. "We've seen a real increase in the amount of information being logged since we began using this application and that helps us determine the best resources needed to help our clients and our staff."

"In this job, you basically work alone," says Louise Gerber, Personal Support Worker. "Now, if something happens at a client's house and I need help, I have a BlackBerry smartphone to reach out to my support network. That's really important for peace of mind."



"By having a BlackBerry smartphone, our staff can communicate with each other and with us, so they're not as isolated. Many of them love that their client visits almost automatically show up on the BlackBerry smartphones, so they can then schedule their own appointments and life events using the same mobile calendar."

~ **Janna Chindamo**, Branch Director,
We Care Home Health Services

The Unexpected and Welcome Spin Offs

Mobilizing personal support workers with BlackBerry smartphones has made an unexpected difference to staff morale. In fact, the BlackBerry smartphone has become a perk of the job – a device that not only helps them work, but benefits their lives, too.

"Everybody needs a network at work" says Chindamo. "By having a BlackBerry smartphone, our staff can communicate with each other and with us, so they're not as isolated. Many of them love that their client visits almost automatically show up on the BlackBerry smartphones, so they can then schedule their own appointments and life events using the same mobile calendar."

Since staff retention is always a consideration for any business, Schram considers their mobility project a big step in keeping the best people working for his company.

"With Medshare for BlackBerry and the BlackBerry smartphones, we're giving our personal support workers real pride in their jobs because we've invested in the technology for them," he says. "We believe that means we'll have less staff turnover, which helps us deliver the best possible services."

"We've seen a real increase in the amount of information being logged since we began using the Medshare for BlackBerry solution, and that helps us determine the best resources needed to help our clients and our staff."

~ **JANNA CHINDAMO**, Branch Director, We Care Home Health Services

We Care's Results

25% Reduction in Scheduling Calls: Calls between care coordinators and personal support workers to schedule visits have been reduced by 25% making We Care's staff and processes more efficient.

Streamlined Administration: Timesheets are now almost automatically updated in the Procura system, which improves the efficiency of payroll and billing, removes the need for manual input, and cuts down on all the paper used.

Better Reporting: Staff report more information on client visits, which helps We Care to better understand their client needs and increases worker safety.

For more information on BlackBerry solutions for small businesses, visit www.blackberry.com/go/smallbusiness

For additional BlackBerry customer success stories, visit www.blackberry.com/go/success

This material, including all material incorporated by reference herein or made available by hyperlink, is provided or made accessible "AS IS" and "AS AVAILABLE" and without condition, endorsement, guarantee, representation or warranty of any kind by Research In Motion Limited and its affiliated companies ("RIM") and RIM assumes no responsibility for any typographical, technical, or other inaccuracies, errors or omissions in this material and shall not be liable for any type of damages related to this material or its use, or performance, or non-performance of any software, hardware, service, or any references to third-party sources of information, hardware or software, products or services including components and content such as content protected by copyright and/or third-party web sites (collectively the "Third Party Products and Services"). When you subscribe to Third Party Products and Services you accept that: 1. It is your sole responsibility to: (a) ensure that your airtime service provider will support all features; (b) identify and acquire all required intellectual property licences prior to installation or use and to comply with the terms of such licences; 2. RIM makes no representation, warranty or guarantee and assumes no liability whatsoever in relation to Third Party Products or Services.

More Networked, Happier Staff with Company Loyalty: Personal support workers now have a network to call upon for support. They use their BlackBerry smartphones as much for work as for making their lives easier. We Care believes this project builds staff loyalty and helps them keep the best people.

"One of the unexpected benefits of giving out BlackBerry smartphones is our personal support workers now have a network. They stay in touch more often with us and other care workers, which gives them support in the field, but also increases their job satisfaction."

~ JANNA CHINDAMO, Branch Director, We Care Home Health Services

Certain features outlined in this document may require a minimum version of BlackBerry Enterprise Server, BlackBerry Desktop Software, BlackBerry Device Software and/or additional RIM/BlackBerry software. Check with service provider for availability, roaming arrangements, service plans and features.

The limitations and exclusions herein shall apply irrespective of the nature of the cause of action and in no event shall any director, employee, agent, distributor, supplier or independent contractor of RIM have any liability related to or use of the material.

©2008 Research In Motion Limited. All rights reserved. BlackBerry®, RIM®, Research In Motion®, SureType® and related trademarks, names and logos are the property of Research In Motion Limited and are registered and/or used in the U.S. and countries around the world. Bluetooth is a trademark of Bluetooth SIG. Microsoft and SQL are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. MKT- 21603-001