

Agency Finds MITC a lot Less Costly and More Effective



Clearbrook is the largest provider of home-based services in Illinois, supporting over 7,000 individuals as well as their families in 14 counties. They serve over 160 communities and 50 locations throughout Chicago, the suburbs, and northern Illinois.

Clearbrook began in the mid-fifties as the vision of a group of northwest suburban Chicagoland parents in response to the unmet educational needs of their children with special needs. What started as a small school in the barn of a Rolling Meadows church grew initially in response to the needs of the children first served by Clearbrook as they aged: vocational services, employment services, and residential services were developed. Eventually, the educational pendulum swung back and, once again children, though now the very young, were identified as a priority population, and Clearbrook's early intervention program was opened. Today, Children's Services include an array of early intervention services, a unique volunteer respite program, an autism resource room, an equipment lending library, and the opportunity to borrow developmentally appropriate and adapted toys. Adult Services include an array of community based residential options, day program services that include options for individuals with autism, aging adults with developmental disabilities, employment training and placement services, and a full complement of clinical services. Home-Based Services provides services for families who prefer their child or adult family member remain in the home environment.

Clearbrook is a 501(c)3 organization, licensed, certified, and/or accredited by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services, SourceAmerica, and the US Department of Labor.

In addition to a large HCBS program, Clearbrook has 50 group homes, 4 ICFs, 7-8 day program sites providing developmental training, community employment services, and training services.

The MITC Difference

Carrie Zielinski, IT Technical Trainer at Clearbrook explains the difference between MITC and their previous system.

"Our previous system was much more expensive, which is not effective for a non-profit. We had swipe card terminals and PC clock-in. The phone option was where costs got out of control. Staff used to punch-in on a computer. This was troublesome because computers often go down, unlike phones. The large in-home

program serving 1,000 clients was all paper. The employees kept paper timesheets, and all of those had to be entered by hand."

"The large in-home program serving 1,000 clients was all paper. The employees kept paper timesheets, and all of those had to be entered by hand."

"Cost savings have been huge for our agency: we have 1,300 user licenses alone. The costs of this would have been astronomical with our previous system.

Now no one at the agency uses paper for time and attendance or PTO.

"In the in-home program, staff clock in via the client's phone. This saves a ton of time. 70% of staff use the phone, including

those at the small residential homes. We have 7 biometric clocks in the largest locations. A small handful of admin staff use online timesheets."

As well as eliminating the costs and risks of paper timesheets in the large HCBS program, MITC added extra functionality that is used to manage Group Homes.

"Clearbrook put the monthly budget information in for all 50 group homes. We use the reports weekly to do variance to budget from week to week and use budget reports help to keep the homes on track. The Vice President gets reports with the reasons for overtime and doesn't have to check it as closely."

Payroll integration has worked the same with MITC as it did in their previous system.

"Payroll integration didn't change much between our previous system and MITC. The file is even named the same thing. The payroll process didn't really change in switching over. After time is all approved, MITC exports to payroll."

"All entry level employees use MITC. Pretty much everyone in the agency requests benefits through there and staff check time. A lot of management staff keep an eye on attendance daily."

"Entering in missed punches is simple, easy, and can be done anywhere. We have a very limited window (24 hours for timecard approval), so the ability to do that from anywhere is essential."

"Entering in missed punches is simple, easy, and can be done anywhere. We have a very limited window (24 hours for timecard approval), so the ability to do that from anywhere is essential."

The Impact

Employees and managers have adapted to the new system:

"Staff like being able to make sure benefit time has been approved. We have a lot of locations without supervisors present, so the best communication is via software. If employees can't punch-in, employees can check to make sure their supervisor put their time in. Managers like that they can do everything from

anywhere. We have lots of staff who work remotely or at home. They are easily able to find any issues, like missing punches. The mobile aspects of it have been helpful."

In addition to payroll, Clearbrook is able to use MITC to help manage the HCBS program

"We use some reports for billing. Clients get so many hours of staff time per year, and we use reports to confirm how many hours are left for the calendar year. This helps for the end result of billing. It has saved time because it's nice and easy for the manager's manager to see everyone's time and balances."

In addition to reducing the cost of ownership to Clearbrook and eliminating paper timesheets in the HCBS program, Clearbrook now has more accurate HCBS records. Carrie Zielinski thinks this has saved payroll as well.

"We had issues when we used to be paper. Now we have a little more control. As time goes on, employees realize they can't get away with friends writing down their time or buddy punching. If employees say the phone wouldn't answer, I can show call logs that assist with where mistakes were made or determine if it was a system issue or perhaps a user problem. We don't lose time I'm sure we were losing before."

"As time goes on, employees realize they can't get away with friends writing down their time or buddy punching."

When Clearbrook rolled out MITC's automatic email and text alert system, it had a big impact:

"We just started using email & text notifications. Managers are greatly enjoying it and sharing it with everyone else. It helps Managers not miss benefit time because they get notification that people asked for time off. Employees are so remote, they just don't see their boss."

Carrie Zielinski recommends getting program staff involved in the implementation planning at a large agency.

"Some of the mistakes we made were due to not having enough program staff involved. There were especially issues going through scenarios and determining how to set things up using codes. I'd recommend involving program staff in the process."

Clearbrook elected to host its own system as the agency had done previously with Kronos. Clearbrook uses a large Telephone Timekeeping system for the HCBS program, Biometrics at larger locations, Employee Self Service, Automated Alerts, Payroll Rules, Reporting & Integration.