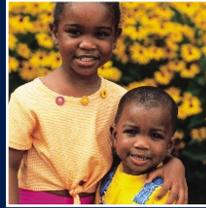
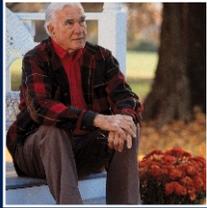


MOBILE REMOTE WORKFORCE



A STATE OF THE ART SOLUTION



Putting Technology to Work



General Management System

The County of San Diego’s General Management System

The County of San Diego’s mission is to provide the best possible services to residents. To achieve this, the County uses a comprehensive guide called the General Management System (GMS), to set sound goals and apply strong management principles.

Mobile Remote Workforce (MRW) and the GMS

The County of San Diego implemented a pilot program to increase efficiencies for its nurses who visit patients at home. The Mobile Remote Workforce is a prime example of GMS in action, in a number of ways. Innovations in technology, systems, and personnel tactics resulted in real improvements in services.

GMS Component	What it is	How MRW used it
Strategic Planning	Long-range (5 year) planning.	Following a Countywide directive, in-depth planning occurred at a departmental level to determine an area for improvement.
Operational Planning	Short-term (2 year) planning.	Analysis of specific financial and systematic details of existing processes led to an outlined approach for improvement.
Monitoring and Control	Evaluation to ensure that goals are tracked, plans followed, and risks identified.	The pilot group and control group were evaluated by an independent consultant.
Functional Threading	Maximizes efficient use of personnel and material resources by coordinating staff and their functions.	The MRW pilot program involved various departments, and it has potential application for even more.
Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition	Encourages continuing progress.	In addition to making jobs easier and saving hundreds of hours, managers took advantage of several opportunities to applaud hard work.

For more information about San Diego County’s GMS, visit www.sdcounty.ca.gov, select “Departments & Services A – Z,” then “Chief Administrative Officer,” then “General Management System.”



Mobile Remote Workforce

Background

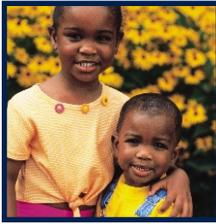
Before Mobile Remote Workforce, nurses faced obstacles to spending more time with their clients, including incomplete and inaccurate referrals and time-consuming administrative tasks. The MRW pilot project reengineered the day-to-day work processes for Public Health Nurses and administrative staff. Involving the workforce from the start was crucial to getting them on board with the changes.

The role of technology in the project became more apparent as discussions continued. The goal was to put technology to work for the Agency, not have the Agency work for technology. The Agency's Chief Information Office and the County's Technology Office were enlisted to brainstorm on what the nurses could use, in the field, to support the redesigned function and structure resulting from MRW. This was another step toward e-Government, an overall County goal.

The measurable impact of Public Health Nurses on the community was a driving force behind the MRW project. Skyrocketing healthcare costs are a continuing burden on communities, and one function of Public Health Nurses is to help keep those costs down by providing services and resources that eliminate the need for emergency services in the future.

The result of MRW is a 75 percent reduction in the time elapsed between case referral and customer contact and a 25 percent sustainable increase in productivity of Public Health Nurse visits in the field. An estimated 2,400 additional clients will be served annually, without adding staff, when the pilot is fully implemented countywide (scheduled for September 2006) and a savings to taxpayers of approximately \$8.5 million is anticipated within a three-year period. Other County departments and programs are expected to put the project into practice, improving cost effectiveness, increasing efficiency and enhancing customer service countywide.

MRW has been beneficial to the County's partners, too. Referring agencies (hospitals and clinics) can more easily track clients in accordance with Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO) requirements.



Mary's Story

The story of Mary, 25, a domestic violence victim, who is pregnant with her second baby, illustrates how the Mobile Remote Workforce has improved how clients receive services.

Mary went into early labor during her first pregnancy. The hospital understands the need for prenatal care and has requested services for her. But Mary has moved to a new apartment, and the hospital clerk referring her to the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency Public Health Center for a home visit forgets to provide an apartment number.

As a result, the Public Health Nurse, Gerri, has to take extra time trying to find Mary. This delays completing other tasks, including sending in a timecard and seeing other clients. Mary is never found and never receives needed services.

Now, thanks to MRW, referring clinics must fill in required fields in the new Web-based referral system. Public Health Nurses receive referrals in the field with new electronic tablets that were introduced as part of the MRW.

As a result of MRW, Mary's story changes dramatically. Gerri gets the right address for Mary the first time, receiving it on her electronic tablet while on a home visit with another client. She fits in Mary's visit that day – which now happens an astounding 11 percent of the time, thanks to MRW. Gerri doesn't have to return to the office to fill out her timecard. Gerri connects Mary with Domestic Violence Services, where she can get the help she needs and has a better chance of delivering a healthy baby.

**What is the Mobile Remote Workforce (MRW)?**

The Mobile Remote Workforce began as a pilot program designed to streamline and modernize the work that San Diego County Public Health Nurses do, using Web-based technology and electronic tablets.

What does MRW accomplish?

Public Health Nurses are able to spend time with more clients and less time on administrative tasks.

Who does this benefit?

Families who are expecting children, or who have infants and children who are at-risk for health complications.

How many more families will be served?

When San Diego County rolls out the pilot project into a countywide practice, Public Health Nurses are expected to serve an additional 2,400 families annually.

What are the savings?

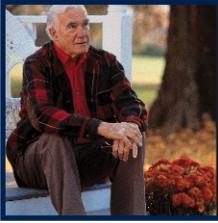
The County anticipates saving taxpayers approximately \$8.5 million within a three year period.

Where else can this process be duplicated?

San Diego County is currently exploring ways in which this Web-based technology could be duplicated and used by other county departments to improve services and achieve better outcomes for residents.

Where can I get more information?

Information about the Mobile Remote Workforce can be obtained at www.sandiego-mrw.org or you can call Nick Macchione, M.S., M.P.H., C.H.E., Deputy Director, County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency at (858) 616-5996.



Next Steps - Where do we go from here?

Due to the tremendous success of the Mobile Remote Workforce (MRW) pilot project, San Diego County will expand it into a full-scale program serving clients countywide. This expansion will enable the County's 91 nurses to serve an additional 2,400 high risk families annually, without adding staff. The County is also currently exploring possibilities on how Web-based services such as the MRW can be duplicated and used by other county departments to improve services and achieve better outcomes for the residents it serves. Some of the ways that Web-based technology and electronic tablets might be used to benefit the community and expedite county response times might be for child abuse reporting, adult protective services and public works, to name a few. The County of San Diego is dedicated and committed to continuing to improve services that lead to stronger prevention efforts, accountability, improved outcomes and the overall health and well-being of residents.



“Under the program, incomplete referral forms have dropped from 98 percent to zero, and the county expects to save about \$2 million annually when all public health nurses begin using the new system.”- www.countynews.org

“The pilot program was so successful that the county plans to roll it out to all six of its centers by the fall of this year, anticipating even greater success on a larger scale.” - www.nursezone.com

“...several nurses and social workers praised the new system.” - *San Diego Union Tribune*

“It has saved me a phenomenal amount of time,’ said Rachel Asman of the Escondido Union School District, who refers teen moms to the county health department.” - www.countynews.org

“In addition to the increase in number of patients nurses were able to see, the waiting time between referral and visit also dropped dramatically.” - *San Diego Union Tribune*

“When fully implemented, the county’s public health nurses will be able to serve an additional 2,400 families - a feat that would have required hiring 23 new nurses at a cost of \$2 million, according to Macchione.” - www.countynews.org

“County nurses will soon be able to reach many more people in need of health care, thanks to a highly successful pilot program. What the county Health and Human Services Agency did was to simplify things by using computers instead of paper.” - *San Diego Union-Tribune*

“The results were remarkable. ‘The time of referral from the referral agencies went from three hours to three minutes,’ Macchione said. ‘Our referral-to-patient-visit time was improved by 75 percent, and we went from 98 percent inaccuracy in our referrals to 100 percent accuracy, because the automated system gave prompts for all the information it needed. And we were able to demonstrate a 25 percent increase in productivity - that’s 25 percent more patients seen - without diminishing any of our quality indicators.’” - www.nursezone.com

“During the 10-month experiment, nurses saw an average of 122 patients a month, 25 percent more than before, Macchione said. Clients include teenage mothers, premature babies and others who are at some kind of health risk and need free health care and in-home nursing visits.” - *San Diego Union-Tribune*