

LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Award Project Evaluation

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| Project ID | GG-8 |
| Title of Program | Non-emergency Medical Transportation |
| Program Category | General Government |
| Submission Date | 6/17/2016 3:31:47 PM |
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| Implementation Date | 7/1/2015 |
| FLSA Designation | Exempt |
| Project Team Members | Candice Rountree |

Description of Productivity Improvement

Wilson County Department of Social Services provides non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) through three contract vendors including Wilson County Transportation, Tar River Transit and Blue Star Cab. Customers are also provided bus tickets and gas vouchers. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation is a much needed service for customers without access to transportation who are Medicaid recipients. Many customers have serious health issues such as dialysis, radiation or chemotherapy. Providing reliable, safe transportation is part of a comprehensive treatment plan for these individuals. NEMT is a high volume program servicing 695 customers per month, fielding 1,354 phone calls requesting service and verifying service eligibility for the average of 4,314 trips provided per month. Our NEMT team had a vision for a more efficient infrastructure to secure the daily operation of this high-volume program. Our transportation staff are now using a paperless tracking system which includes all required state forms and the ability to verify eligibility, enter ride information and issue an approval letter to the customer. In 2015, we also began full implementation of a Televox automated call system to remind our customers of their medical appointments. All customers receive a phone call 2 days prior to their appointment. The paperless system along with Televox affords our small staff of four to perform their job responsibilities in an effective, efficient manner.

Description of why this project was initiated

Wilson County DSS has been able to serve a larger number of customers who need assistance with Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) in a streamlined, efficient manner. We have not added additional staff, resulting in a cost-savings to the county. The full implementation of Televox has reduced our postage costs and serves as a real time reminder to our customers regarding their upcoming appointments. We have been able to better address our no-show customers, as we have a paperless system where all information from the customer's file is easily accessible. By closely monitoring our no-show daily report and educating our customers, we have seen a reduction in our number of no-shows. This project was initiated to streamline the process, improve our customer service and address fraud within the system. Our paperless system helps ensure that we are completing the necessary documentation to ensure eligibility.

- The NEMT electronic database was updated to house all state forms required for program compliance.
- Forms are now stored within the database, eliminating the cost of paper copies and filing cabinets for storage.
- NEMT workers are able to access the database and see all information related to the customer, resulting a time savings for that worker.
- Vendor ride reports are generated from the database and e-mailed to the vendors on a daily bases, eliminating the cost of printing and faxing.
- The team leader can generate several reports which saves time with respect to monitoring.

Quantifiable results (sustainability, cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of service).

Indication of what resources were used and what was done with any accrued time savings

We used internal staff resources to develop our tracking system and we believe this paperless system has resulted in cost avoidance by allowing us to serve a greater number of customers without having to increase our staff members. Through careful monitoring by the NEMT team leader, we have reduced the number of no-shows. When a customer no-shows for an appointment, payment must occur for the transportation; through careful monitoring and customer education, we have achieved a streamlined process. Implementation of the Televox Automated Messaging System provides phone calls to transportation customers verifying that their request has been scheduled and providing the customer with a reminder phone call two days prior to their appointment. The use of Televox has allowed our agency to discontinue paper notices to our customers, realizing a postage savings of \$550 per month. We estimate a staff time savings that results in \$3958 per month.

The implementation of Televox eliminated the need for a worker to make daily phone calls to our customers, advising them that the agency had received their transportation request.

- Workers key the request the same business day the message was received.
- A report is generated daily, and is electronically shared with Televox.
- Televox places an automatic phone call to the customer the next business day. This phone call eliminates the need for a paper approval notice.
- Televox generates a report of the outcome of the calls and shares this with DSS staff. This report identifies cancelled appointments and customers who were not contacted due to out of order numbers.
- Cancelled requests are handled immediately with the transportation vendor; helping eliminate no-shows.
- Televox calls customers 2 business days prior to their scheduled transportation pick-up

- This reminder call has decreased the number of no-show customers, as the customer has the option to cancel the request during the reminder call.

Other descriptive information

Our NEMT team was recognized during a recent state audit for our paperless tracking system which includes all customer file information, required state forms and vendor information. The auditor noted that all forms were easily accessible and that the paperless tracking system was a best practice. The NEMT database was developed by our internal staff, with no cost to the agency. Customer records are organized, allowing NEMT workers to access the information and be more productive because all of the information is in one place. The use of Televox also gives our staff more time for other job duties. Customers report that they appreciate the phone calls, both the notice of approval and reminder calls.