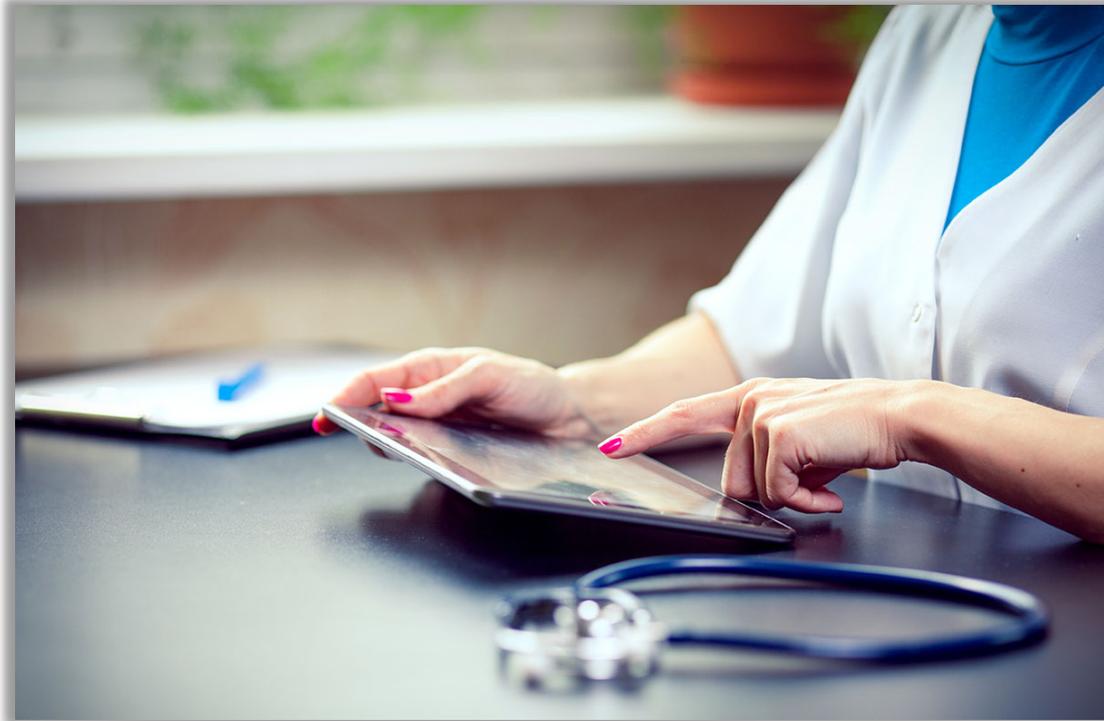# Caregiver Invests in Electronic Health Records, Achieves Company-Wide Insight and Efficiency

The IDD services company takes care to the next level through improved quality, real-time data, centralized dashboards, and more

(Fort Worth, TX) … Can technology improve care for some of society's most vulnerable citizens? That's what Fort Worth-based Caregiver, Inc. set out to find as the regional service provider for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) began its migration from a paper health record system to an electronic health record system over a year ago.

While technology has become inseparable from healthcare services – the source of efficiency and repository of insights, all allowing providers to do so much more with less paperwork, searching and filing – Caregiver ensures technology benefits all aspects of its business, most importantly improving the lives of the individuals it serves.

First, some background: necessary record and data systems have historically been manual, paper-based, and time-consuming. Too often recordkeeping even became distracting, draining caregivers' time away from the

people they were meant to be helping. And since individuals with IDD are among the most vulnerable under care, with many needs and ongoing attention, the paperwork was never-ending.

Now, Caregiver electronically gathers information about each person, inputs and protects the data, and can securely access and assess information quickly to strengthen every aspect of the business. A few important benefits:

- Digitized information is both accurate and more comprehensive.
- Documentation is high quality, understandable and reliable.
- Caregivers can spend more time on care rather than paperwork.

Our priority is quality and performance improvement, and with an optimized EHR, we always know how we're delivering on our goals. When we provide care that is the highest quality with the most efficient delivery, everyone wins: the individuals and payers.

- What used to take a month or a quarter to find and review, Caregiver can now access nearly immediately.
- Quick access to accurate info means identification of potential issues right away.
- Fast assessments mean immediate and consistent responses rather than lagging or languishing resolution.
- The company can monitor and improve upon numerous KPIs across every department.
- Caregiver EHR and all data systems are accessed via fully-secured, HIPAA-compliant cloud hosted platforms.
- All private information is protected using the highest security standards at all times.

Here's a closer look at how Caregiver's EHR is improving the lives of those they serve as well as those who work for the company, while also boosting the business.

"Our priority is quality and performance improvement, and with an optimized EHR, we always know how we're delivering on our goals," said Cameron Dasso, RN, Vice President of Technology for Caregiver. "When we provide care that is the highest quality with the most efficient delivery, everyone wins: the individuals and payers."

Efficiency and Quality of Care, Increased Communication

With electronic health records, Caregiver's teams can respond immediately to incidents or health issues before they escalate, which reduces emergency room and hospital visits. Trips to the ER or hospital can be stressful for anyone, but for the IDD population, they are particularly traumatic. When Caregiver can prevent these visits by acting proactively and quickly, the individual benefits greatly, and immense expenses are also avoided.

Caregiver's nursing staff is saving time and improving quality of care. With the new EHR system, nurses have immediate notifications about changes or issues, as well as access to real-time data, which has improved nursing response times and allows for quality intervention from nurses. Previously, a nurse might review an incident on a paper chart after the fact, and a preventable situation escalated instead; this was challenging for the individuals, frustrating for staff, and often costly, as well. Real-time data that's remotely accessible means that a nurse can be

effective from afar; he or she can review and make sound decisions without needing to head in for an unnecessary visit, or, if needed, they can appropriately intervene for a more serious incident. Also, on-call nurses can see an individual's entire chart in the system and make educated, real-time decisions versus losing precious time by needing to drive to a home in the middle of the night to look at a paper chart and make a decision in the middle of a crisis.

"Now, when something unexpected happens, we're able to respond quickly, efficiently, and appropriately through real-time notification from the system," said Dasso. "And as a situation happens, everything is documented in the EHR system, from what happened, to how we responded, to the outcomes. We have a system and a protocol to instantly notify the right person, and we have a much more consistent and quick response time to handle situations appropriately."

This instant notification is one part of overall improved communications. Caregiver team members can communicate in real-time in a secure and efficient manner. The system allows staff to shorten response times while having effective means of communication such as secure messaging, video conferencing, telepsychiatry, and more.

Real-Time Data Meets Trending and Forecasting

With real-time data monitoring, rather than former monthly or quarterly reviews, Caregiver can act quickly, making necessary adjustments to an individual's care. As well, the company can look ahead to the future to make quantitative predictions about an individual's health or behavior along with business performance.

For instance, if an individual is prone to high blood sugar episodes, the company can both monitor the individual to intervene quickly in a crisis, as well as look at the body of data to review, analyze, and trend the patterns of specific health challenges.

"If we can prevent an illness or critical incident while improving our overall processes, we can produce better outcomes," commented Dasso.

In addition to monitoring and forecasting incidences, illnesses, and basic vital signs to better manage care, Caregiver can also identify business-related trends. For instance, the company can identify trends around quality and consistency of documentation, utilization of services to better anticipate needs; employee performance, staffing, business performance, and financial performance, and more.

"As a business, the better we can predict how and when our services are needed, as well as who will be needed to deliver them and the associated cost, the nimbler and more

effective we can be as a company," said Dasso.

Business Intelligence, KPIs, and Quality Management

As care and work lives improve, so does the business. Centralized, timely data contributes to the bottom line.

Caregiver's business intelligence suite of tools can measure results on an ongoing basis. Key performance indicators (KPIs) show Caregiver what's really working and what's not, rather than anecdotally assessing situations, staffing levels, and service needs. Forecasts are another benefit, with carefully tracked conditions, demographics, service levels, need changes and trends, and medical factors helping map a forward path for future best practices and service models. Caregiver now has the ability to benchmark and monitor cross-departmental KPIs for a holistic company review.

Example KPIs:

- labor and staffing
- turnover and engagement
- satisfaction and payroll metrics
- EBITA
- revenue
- documentation quality and consistency
- review of critical incidents and improvement of response
- utilization of services
- etc.

"With the EHR platform, we have accurate and quantitative data that allows us to better assess and measure quality and business performance in real time," continued Dasso. "Paper reports are slow and can leave an incomplete picture. With quality, centralized, digital data, we can continue to improve and grow every day, delivering our best for the individual and the business."

Caregiver's business intelligence (BI) suite enables the company to compile cross-departmental dashboards and labor data along with service delivery data to measure productivity more accurately, predict overtime, and manage labor more efficiently.

"Through our system, we have a more efficient method of managing labor, reducing unnecessary overtime, and providing better visibility into staffing patterns," said Dasso. "When you have efficient data entry and consumption, plus reporting, the company and the payers achieve overall cost savings. It's an exciting time to be in such an important business of helping our individuals."

ABOUT CAREGIVER, INC.

Caregiver, Inc., is a privately held company with 4200 employees within the headquarters support group and branded affiliate organizations in four states. The affiliates provide intermediate, home and community care services to over 3000 individuals who qualify as developmentally or intellectually disabled or are impacted by related conditions. Caregiver, Inc. was formed in 2015 and now includes these affiliates: Unified Care Group, Southern Concepts; River Gardens; Daybreak Community Services Inc.; St. Giles Living Centers; Mosaic; DSA of Indiana; CG-HHC; All Care Services; T/R Residential; S&K of Canton, Ohio; and Omni Support Services of Tennessee. All have similar service offerings and strong reputations in their local communities. Caregiver services include supported home living, family protective services, case coordination, nursing services, respite services, day habilitation, psychology services, dental treatment, specialized therapies, adaptive aids, minor home modifications, and supported employment. Caregiver president and CEO is Mark Lashley. Company headquarters are at 4800 Overton Plaza, Suite 440, Fort Worth, Texas 76109. Phone is (800) 299-5161. They are on the web at cg-idd.com.