



Neudesic + Inland Regional Center Transforming Case Management to Resolve 30-Year-Old Legacy System Challenges

Inland Regional Center (IRC) selected Neudesic to accelerate their journey to Microsoft Azure when their existing on-premises legacy system was exacerbating reporting and management complexities and creating additional operational costs. Now, they're able to leverage a person-centered approach to case management and holistically manage the patient and consumer lifecycle.

The Client

A Beloved Community Resource Struggles with Disruption Like so many organizations at the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, IRC faced unprecedented challenges, including new operational inefficiencies and complexities arising from this global event. As the largest of 21 regional centers within California's Department of Developmental Services (DDS), IRC provides services and programs to a community of over 46,000 people with developmental disabilities and their families. Based in Southern California, IRC is a nonprofit private corporation that contracts with DDS to provide and coordinate services, as well as, support individuals with developmental disabilities.

IRC was using financial and case management systems running on IBM AS/400 that had been in place since the mid- 1980's, a de-facto standard for all of the 21 regional centers. It was designed during a time when the entire regional center network had significantly fewer staff and consumers and was unable to support IRC's accelerated growth at scale from both a technological and business perspective. Additionally, it was causing persistent operational disruption due to frequent system outages that impacted business continuity, increased costs, and placed increasing pressure on their workforce.

The Pandemic Amplifies IRC's Existing Issues

- **Outdated reporting:** Systems and information weren't updated to display current, accurate information.
- **Fragmented view of consumers:** Case managers don't have a complete snapshot of the life story of their consumers.
- **Lack of real-time data & analytics-driven insights:** Negatively impacts decision making and auditing processes.
- **Lack of a client portal:** Unable to support digitally driven consumer interactions and interfaces.
- **Data duplication:** Amount of data duplication and opportunities for errors is immense.

The Challenge

Challenges Persist: Workarounds, A Fragmented View of Consumers & Outdated Reporting

The pandemic only intensified IRC's ongoing challenges: their case managers were unable to conduct patient and consumer interviews in-person when the organization was forced to make a swift transition to remote work as lockdown mandates rolled out. Traditionally, employees at IRC operated within two physical facility centers, which primarily served as offices. Most consumer interactions occurred out in the community and in the family's home. The pandemic necessitated that the entirety of their consumer appointments and employee interactions shift to virtual, which spotlighted the inefficiencies of their legacy systems and costly, manually-intensive reporting and administrative processes.

Using paper documents and file cabinet systems to manage consumers and employees resulted in outdated reporting as systems and information weren't consistently updated to display current, accurate information. IRC's legacy system was also contributing to overly complex workflows, and a lack of real-time data and transparency impacted decision-making and process auditing.

"We wanted to eliminate workarounds and band-aid systems, and leverage a system that would scale as we grow," Merissa Steuwer, CFO at IRC, elaborates. "We also needed real-time data and data mining capabilities, especially nowadays; when DDS wants information, they want it yesterday. It wasn't as easy to provide them with datasets or any sort of information they needed with the system we had."

To be proactively responsive to the needs of their employees and customers and realize their unique vision of person-centered design in the workforce, IRC needed to migrate to a modern, cloud-based platform. They also wanted a 360° view of consumer profiles to gain a complete picture of the life story of each of their consumers and deliver exceptional, tailored services per individual.

“ Being IRC, we tend to try and forge our own path when and if possible so we can set the standard for what the other regional centers can look to. ”

– Kurtis Franklin, Information Technology Manager, Inland Regional Center



“We are governed by the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act, and one of the things that impresses upon us is that we want to ensure not only that our consumers are out in the community and not hidden away, but we are also out in the community making sure we’re providing those services to them,” says Kurtis, Information Technology Manager at IRC.

“If we let the systems get out of the way, and we can focus more on that case management aspect and that individual consumer aspect of what we do, then we end up having much better services for those clients.”

Healthcare community populations require specific guidance, care and access to the right services and resources. Also, the healthcare payment system landscape is expansive with complex approval cycles, particularly pertaining to government funded programs.

With outdated systems, IRC couldn’t efficiently keep track of their payments and authorizations. This had a direct impact on care services because clients are not placed in proper care facilities that can administer the most appropriate treatments and care for their unique client needs.

“In response to the ongoing concern from our case managers that we have basically outgrown our current system, we wanted a modern, user-friendly system that would not only address our current needs but could sustain our future growth and the ever-evolving needs of the population we serve,” says Steuwer. “Part of what’s lacking is for us to be able to really track the progress of our consumer, because no matter what point or age our consumer entered our system, we have them for life. We want to track their progress, we want to know their life story, which is severely lacking in the systems that we’ve used in the past. For us not to be able to tell what really goes on in our consumer, or not have the entire story, is a travesty.”



The Solution

Realizing the Vision for a Next-Generation Case Management Platform

After reaching out to Microsoft, IRC was referred to Neudesic to support the implementation of a new, holistic case management platform. Neudesic and IRC worked together closely throughout the discovery, exploratory, and deployment phases to align IRC's vision for a case management platform with the specific services they provide, the end-user demands, and compliance requirements.

"One of the reasons we gravitated towards Neudesic was the financial aspect, because they were willing to partner with us on our discovery and exploratory process and split the costs with us," says Steuwer. "How many organizations out there are willing to do the work with us knowing that this is just a discovery process, yet they're willing to go halfway with us on the cost?"

Neudesic's Care Management Platform was adapted and customized to meet IRC's specific needs. "Our Care Management Platform was a perfect fit for IRC. Our solution allowed for quick implementation while providing IRC the customizations needed to meet their organization where they are today while allowing flexibility for future growth and needs," explains Shantanu Sarkar, VP Healthcare Business Unit, at Neudesic.

The new platform works in conjunction with Microsoft Dynamics CRM for Healthcare and unites various patient services to ensure healthcare communities can access the right healthcare services for individual patient needs and cases. Neudesic's Care Management Platform and Document Intelligence Platform (DIP) and Microsoft Power Platform enable the entire customer patient care journey to be managed across patient care, services, finances, and insurance so IRC would benefit from improved and automated data entry, up to date reporting capabilities, and auditing transparency while adhering to CMS compliance.

"The platform is all about having the full view and profile of the specific consumer. It's built to manage the whole life cycle profile and everything the consumer needs to know about the service they have rights to and ensuring that they don't effectively fall through the cracks. From a case manager's perspective, the platform simplifies the process of looking at their workload and clients and automatically notifies them when a situation has changed that requires their involvement. It's really that whole care continuum focus," Riaan van der Merwe, Senior Director, Healthcare Practice at Neudesic, elaborates.



“ Since the beginning of our engagement with Neudesic, we have felt very confident in their team. Moving into the future, this transformation will help us significantly improve for our consumers and our staff. ”

**– Lavinia Johnson, Executive Director,
Inland Regional Center**



The Benefits

Setting a Precedent for Holistic Care Management

The new Azure-supported care management platform enables IRC to automatically update, manage and monitor constantly fluctuating case management regulations. IRC can now maintain regulatory compliance and benefit from synchronized data and reporting.

Furthermore, modernized case management capabilities improves access to workloads, enhances viewing of patient information, and provides notification alerts and settings for both efficient event organizing and fluctuating work requirements. IRC is also able to facilitate an intuitive approach to interacting and interfacing with their community, an increasing number of whom are technically savvy.

“We really wanted to have a good case management platform, and part of that is ensuring we had a good way of interacting and interfacing with our community. Now we’ll be the first regional center to have this level of instant information sharing, interaction and interface with all of our clients and their families,” says Franklin.

Neudesic’s Care Management Platform ensured that IRC realized their vision for human-centered design, giving them the technological capabilities and foundation to modernize. As a result, IRC can respond and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that have drastically altered the healthcare management solutions landscape, and ensure their workforce is equipped with the tools and capabilities to facilitate exceptional, meaningful care for developmentally disabled communities.

“At the end of the day, we are a social service entity; we provide case management services to people with developmental disabilities,” Steuwer concludes.

“Part of the beauty of what we’re doing with Neudesic is we’re now able to tell the real story of the consumers we serve.”

IRC’s new care management platform has resulted in the following benefits:

- **30% efficiency improvement for data re-entry.**
- **25% improvement in case management processes.**
- **50% improvement in services approval processes.**
- **Ability to enable real-time reporting.**
- **\$500k/year in operational savings.**
- **Ability to leverage real-time data.**