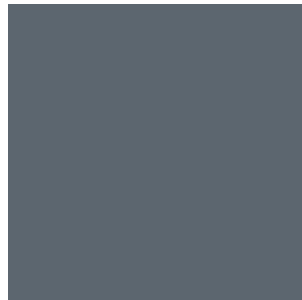


NEMT Software for Senior Care: The Case for Automation

How software can alleviate much of the daily work that senior care centers do.



Seniors care organizations have unique needs that can be addressed using NEMT software. Better technology means better overall service.

SENIOR CARE ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE FOR NEMT SOFTWARE

There are two main reasons why a senior care center would require automation. 1) They are overflowing with trips and scheduling is a nightmare; and 2) They want to prepare for a future where #1 is bound to happen. Remember that scheduling isn't just about vehicles. If you're like most seniors organizations, you also have to handle the scheduling of personal care assistants and home health workers. Automation and non-emergency medical transportation software is there to reduce conflicts so everyone gets to where they're going – and on time.

What Does Automation Accomplish?

Automation is the process by which a computer or system can function on its own based upon the instructions given to them by a controller. You are the controller. NEMT software does more than just store data in its memory. It can help your schedulers make better choices based upon the calculations it makes. In the same way that your cellphone “remembers” your contact info, automatically synching with your home computer through a cloud server, NEMT software solutions creates the same level of efficiency that you might encounter in your day-to-day life. But the benefits are far more attractive.

Your database becomes easily accessible (securely and conveniently) from a variety of locations, which allows call takers, dispatchers, drivers, participants and care givers to communicate more accurately, quickly and safely. What are your current conditions? Do you have a growing membership base? Is your current system prepared for the future? Automation helps to streamline key areas of a transportation and home care organization, with features such as:

- Searchable client database (using DOB, partial name, current address)
- Participant special needs
- Driver info and schedules
- Optional event scheduling to manage home visits
- Volunteer drivers
- Optimal route scheduling

But let's start by breaking down the case for automation into 3 simple areas:



FUTURE DEMAND

Statistics show that the aging population is poised to double in the next fifteen years. It goes without saying that senior care organizations are going to need more health workers and more drivers to fill the needs of their membership. Consider the amount of care givers, personal care assistants, meal delivery services, etc. that are going to be on the road and in the homes of your members.

Home Visit Management

When things get busy and complicated, it's incredibly difficult to keep time-table conflicts from occurring. The ability to coordinate all departments so that they work in synchronicity is going to be the defining concerns of future PACE and senior health providers. This may very well be what you're facing right now. This may be due to the fact that two databases are being employed: one for home visits and one for transportation. This is far less efficient than having a single unified system to reduce conflicts and errors.





Managing the Many Moving Parts

Transporting a participant to a medical appointment may mean also coordinating the transportation of a personal care giver or other health assistant. Many members require a home visit by a caregiver before they leave for another appointment. A member may even require or request

a specific caregiver who is on their own, personal daily schedule. These events may recur with regularity, or show up sporadically depending upon need. A doctor's visit, for example may run long and your drivers may require to wait for a 'will call' notification. There are any number of contingencies and moving parts that require attention. Dispatchers using a radio simply don't have the access they can have with NEMT software with an electronic logging feature. A driver's time can be wasted if they don't know where to be. Software allows dispatchers to choose optimal locations of all vehicles to deal with 'will calls' and last-minute cancelations.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Examine the efficiency of your current structure. What are the key areas you have noticed that are causing the greatest problem? When membership grows, the first area that suffers is scheduling. Simply put, are your participants getting to their appointments on time? Are they being picked up on time? Are they complaining about your service? The first area to look at is your call center to discover how many complaints you've received and of what nature the complaints were. Let's look at a few of the most common complaints that senior care centers encounter.

-  **A pick-up was late.** This complaint comes from the fact that either the schedule was in error. It can also mean that a participant was not notified appropriately to alert them as to the status of their ride.
-  **They were sent the wrong caregiver.** Because medical care is intimately connected to a participant's well-being and quality of life, it causes much grief and discomfort when the wrong caregiver is assigned. This is a problem with event scheduling. Home visits need to be scheduled independently from transportation services.
-  **A scheduled home visit was missed.** If a caregiver's visit has been scheduled in one system, while the transportation service was scheduled in another, the two may not align. The problem is that the caregiver doesn't have access to the information that would show the participant's total day's schedule. The same can happen, but in reverse: a home care worker may still be engaged with a participant when a vehicle arrives, potentially delaying a pick up.
-  **Return trip was late.** This is due most likely to the fact that a driver couldn't wait long enough to be available for a 'will call' moment. With NEMT software, this process can be automated so that drivers know exactly how long to wait, or when they're likely to get dispatched elsewhere. The system helps to heal the schedule in real time.

IMPROVED PARTICIPANT CARE

A disruption to a mapped out day, early on in the day has a domino effect on all the events afterwards. If customer care is at the center of concern, why isn't the system built around their needs first? This is exactly where automation and NEMT software becomes instrumental. By keeping the participant's needs/home care visits/transportation requirements at the center of the operation, the software builds efficiencies automatically in order to maintain the participant's daily needs.

This type of efficiency becomes necessary as more and more participants are added to the daily plan. Every member has distinct needs for various services. Every member has a specific time and place to be at throughout the day. As well, each member may have a variable return ride time. All this data can lead to chaos.

An Organization's Credibility is Dependability

It's simply not enough to attempt dependability. When calls come in complaining about the decrease in service they've received, everyone suffers. Managing multiple participants and multiple daily caregiver trips, blended into a single view, is essential to keep your service dependable.

Matching Participant to Caregiver

One aspect of NEMT software is the ability to optimize routes. But it's not always about simply delivering a caregiver on time to the right place. Participants may have preferences as well as exclusions as to which caregivers may provide them service. Mismatching parties can have an extremely negative effect on both.

Matching skill level of home care staff with need level is also essential. This means that a participant is at risk of getting care from someone that doesn't have the capacity to provide the care. Schedulers, dispatchers, drivers and caregivers create a database into which all these fields can be recorded. Each participant can be assured to receive (automatically) the proper level of "capacity" matching. As various tasks are shared and broken down, the system adjusts to ensure the right caregiver is dispatched to the right location.

CONCLUSION

Every organization operates within their own unique set of conditions. But one of the areas that they all share is a concern for the service they provide to their members. In the end, it's all about enabling our aging population now and long into the future with access to care and transportation to improve the overall quality of life. If you're interested in learning more, contact one of our software specialists and we can build a quote around your unique situation as well as offer you a demonstration of the software in action using your own organization's operation as an example.