

2009 NASCIO Recognition Awards Nomination Commonwealth of Kentucky

Nomination Category:

Digital Government: Government to Citizen (G to C)

Title of Nomination:

Kentucky Integrated Child Care System (KICCS)

Nomination Submitted By:

Kentucky's Commonwealth Office of Technology

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Executive Summary

In May 2008, Kentucky CHFS (Cabinet for Health and Family Services) implemented a new child care management application. This application, called Kentucky Integrated Child Care System (KICCS), replaced the child care management system that had been in use since 1998. KICCS has fully replaced the old system with a user-friendly, efficient, and reliable system that has created entirely new functionality and enhanced previous system capabilities.

The successful implementation of the KICCS application has realized benefits for everyone involved. The KICCS application has made a significant change to CCAP case management procedures, creating a simpler system that is more responsive to CCAP worker and client needs, Improved staff supervision, system security, increased staff efficiency and improved the work product.

Maximizing benefits to the citizens of Kentucky is the core principle guiding the development of the KICCS application. Improvements realized as a result of KICCS development have made it possible for CCAP workers to streamline business practices, making Kentucky's subsidized child care system both more consistent and more reliable for the child care provider and for the ultimate user, the citizen

The KICCS automated payment system has greatly improved the payment system, enabling CCAP workers to institute business practices that render manual calculations no longer necessary

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Description

In May 2008, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) implemented a new child care management application called KICCS (Kentucky Integrated Child Care System). This new system was designed and built in-house and based on business requirements established by the Division of Child Care (DCC) in the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), which manages the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). CCAP workers are responsible for placing eligible children into subsidized child care programs and for managing the provider approval and payment systems, disbursing child care payments on a scheduled basis. The old system (KCCMS) had supported business processes used by CCAP workers to manage the child care eligibility system since 1998. The technology infrastructure supporting KCCMS had become obsolete: servers were out of warranty; infrastructure and software products were no longer supported. It became essential to replace the KCCMS system; performance gaps were substantial. Some of the difficulties faced in using the old system were:

CCAP workers were hampered by their inability to see statewide eligibility data; only data from their local service areas was available.

The EAV (Enrollment Attendance Verification) system, which is essential to accurate billing and provider payments, was complicated and difficult for CCAP workers who had to complete some parts of the process manually.

KCCMS was a case-based system. Clients were attached to a single case, creating multiple administrative issues for CCAP workers.

KCCMS allowed CCAP workers to delete entered data; this delete functionality increased the risk of fraud.

KCCMS used the client SSN (Social Security Number) as an identifier throughout the system, putting the client's personal information at risk.

Staff workload, efficiency and consistency were almost impossible to monitor in KCCMS.

KICCS is designed to be a web-based application using .NET technology with an Oracle 10G database as the back end. This flexible, robust physical framework allows the KICCS system to adapt as needed to stay current with CCAP business needs.

KICCS has fully replaced KCCMS with a user-friendly, efficient, and reliable system that has created entirely new functionality and enhanced previous capabilities. These enhanced capabilities provided DCC with multiple opportunities for business improvements:

Advanced capability to extract data to create reports

Automation of the EAV (Enrollment Attendance Verification) and associated billing processes

Child-based system improves case management capabilities for CCAP workers

Work basket / supervisor work basket system enables CCAP workers to perform

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more efficiently while supervisors can easily monitor performance and workload
Improved security measures
Increased provider and client satisfaction

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services has established as a goal that Kentucky's children must have access to safe, healthy and appropriate child care. The KICCS application was designed to facilitate CCAP business practices, enhancing the ability of CCAP workers to offer citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky quality, safe subsidized child care. Parents are freed to work or attend school, secure in the knowledge that their children are well cared for.

Significance to the Improvement of Government

The implementation of the KICCS application has enabled DCC and the CCAP agencies to evaluate their business practices, improving existing practices when possible, and instituting new practices that enhance the agencies' abilities to serve their clients.

Improving Staff Supervision

KCCMS had almost no capability to monitor staff workload, production, and efficiency. Supervisors struggled to evaluate employees who sometimes are not in the same office. The KICCS application enables CCAP and DCC administrators to accurately and easily supervise staff performance.

The supervisor workbasket feature of the KICCS application displays all cases belonging to CCAP workers who are assigned to the supervisor, enabling him to monitor and evaluate cases as necessary. For the convenience of the supervisor, cases can be sorted by subject matter, or by individual staff member.

Improving System Security

System security has improved with KICCS as all saved entries into the application are now captured. Supervisors can see any actions taken in individual cases, and can also see provider payments and rates.

Improving Staff Efficiency

The KICCS application's enhanced features enable CCAP workers to function more efficiently in numerous ways.

CCAP workers process few under / overpayments.

The KICCS system stores more information. CCAP workers are not required to re-enter existing data; current data can be updated or added to. KCCMS required that all data be entered anew for each intake.

Manual processes are eliminated or minimized by the KICCS system. Formerly, processing EAVs and enrollments required significant manual effort.

EAV system automation greatly decreases the time spent in preparing the monthly payment batch runs.

The work basket feature enables the CCAP worker to manage his case load more efficiently; less time is spent on paper processes, freeing him to do the important work of child care placement.

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Improving Staff Work Product

Implementation of the KICCS system has seen noticeable improvements in the overall quality of staff work product.

As a result of automating procedures, KICCS has also stimulated uniformity of work product among the various service areas. Previously, local work procedures were unique to the local service area, promoting different standards for different areas.

Uniformity of work product has facilitated communication between the various service areas and DCC.

Benefit of the Project

Maximizing benefits to the citizens of Kentucky is the core principle guiding the development of the KICCS application. Improvements realized as a result of KICCS development have made it possible for CCAP workers to streamline business practices, making Kentucky's subsidized child care system both more consistent and more reliable for the child care provider and for the ultimate user, the citizen.

Improved quality of care: system management improvements enable child care providers to focus their efforts on care quality issues such as staffing, rendering benefits to parents and children.

Standardized co-payments: the KICCS system utilizes logic which manages the co-payments required of some parents, guaranteeing that payments are accurate and consistent.

Backdating of enrollments: the KICCS system enables users to systematically backdate child care enrollments, which ensures that parents are billed accurately.

Standardized forms: the KICCS system standardizes the forms that all parents are required to complete to verify eligibility for child care assistance, understanding and ease of use for the parents.

Parents are able to continue working or to pursue education, contributing to their personal well-being and to the well-being of all of Kentucky's citizens.

Improved Payment System

KCCMS restrictions made the payment system a source of significant difficulties for CCAP workers who were required to complete some sections of the billing process manually, at a cost of many worker hours. Payment inaccuracies had to be corrected manually requiring additional worker hours.

Payment inaccuracies were also troublesome for providers who had to make the necessary adjustments, refunding sums when overpaid, or waiting for underpayments. These inconsistent payments made it difficult for providers to make and maintain a reliable budget

Most importantly, payment inaccuracies were a problem for parents who could not anticipate and budget for a consistent child care payment.

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The KICCS automated payment system has greatly improved the payment system, enabling CCAP workers to institute business practices that render manual calculations no longer necessary.

Providers can be paid daily, improving their ability to manage budgetary issues.

Accurate payments enable the provider to predict and plan for future income.

CCAP workers can look at cases on a statewide basis; as a result they create fewer duplicate cases, and fewer duplicate payments.

Automated processes greatly reduce the amount of time required to create a payment run.

Fewer children lose child care placements.

Improved Case Management

The KICCS application has made a significant change to CCAP case management procedures, creating a simpler system that is more responsive to CCAP worker and client needs. KCCMS was a case-based system; KICCS is a child-based system which more accurately reflects the real-world situations that CCAP workers encounter.

CCAP workers can remove a single child from a case without closing the case.

A single child can now appear in multiple cases.

Eligibility is attached to the child; a single case can therefore have multiple eligibilities.

Enrollment status reflects a child's current relation to his provider; enrollment status did not exist in the KCCMS system.

KICCS has instituted a work basket module of great value to CCAP workers. Cases that require some action on the part of the worker appear in the work basket, sorted into searchable categories, giving the CCAP worker a management tool that enables him to be current with his case assignments.

Improved Reporting Capabilities

KCCMS had limited reporting capabilities; reports were compiled manually, increasing the possibility of human error. KICCS enables the user to create customized, automated reports that cover many different operating areas.

Improved System Security

KCCMS required that the client's SSN be used as the case number, possibly exposing the client to an unnecessary risk of identity theft. KICCS generates a unique case number, unrelated to any of the client's personal information for each case