



COLORADO

**Governor's Office of
Information Technology**

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PEAKHealth Mobile Application

Nomination Category	Emerging and Innovative Technologies
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Project Initiation Date	July 7, 2014
Project Completion Date	December 19, 2014

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Before *PEAKHealth*, Colorado Medicaid members would dial a call center or office to get their questions answered. Unfortunately, with a boost in Medicaid membership call volume increased, and soon the call centers and offices across the state were overwhelmed with questions. Nearly 50 percent of callers never made it through to get their inquiries answered, which resulted in frustration for all parties and a widening communication gap between the state and the clients it was trying to serve.

In short, citizens were not getting the answers they needed, when they needed them. The state searched for a fast, approachable, and innovative way to reach out to these members and answer their questions. Understanding that clients live in a technologically advanced world where everything is accessible from their phone or computer, the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) researched ways to quickly connect with Coloradans – anytime and anywhere. Colorado’s existing web application PEAK (Program Eligibility and Application Kit) had already achieved success as an online benefits application portal. The next step was to connect with clients on an even more personal level.

State officials worked alongside Deloitte Digital’s creative designers and developers to build an easy-to-use, state-of-the-art, bilingual mobile experience for Colorado Medicaid members. With a focus on demographics and best practices, they created a highly engaging native application for multiple platforms, plus a responsive website, to serve the community. Its name: *PEAKHealth*.

Through *PEAKHealth*, members can update information, check eligibility, view their medical ID card, find providers, add online tutorials, submit Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) enrollment payments, and get useful health tips right from their mobile device or computer. The innovative application functions as a communication channel between government and citizen. It improves client engagement and interaction by providing quick access to critical questions. Its user-friendly and intuitive design reflects usability best practices. Designed for frequent use, another best practice of any mobile application, the app is available to assist in finding answers whenever a client has a Medicaid question.

PEAKHealth is an important milestone in achieving HCPF’s mission to improve health care access and outcomes for the people they serve. The application aligns with key Strategic Policy Initiatives laid out by the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, demonstrating an organizational commitment to long-term strategy. The application makes accessing Medicaid answers faster and easier for clients, ushering in a new age of digital government.



II. BUSINESS PROBLEM AND SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

In the years before *PEAKHealth*, Colorado Medicaid members did not have an easy way to update basic account information and check eligibility status. With so many members to serve, call centers and offices were inundated with a high number of requests every day, and members frequently experienced very long hold times which often caused them to drop the call before reaching an agent. Only 50 percent of customer calls were answered over the course of FY13-14, according to the performance plan at Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. These unanswered calls meant more than 150,000 unanswered questions.

The state began working on a digital solution that would reflect the modern, fast-paced environment in which Medicaid clients lived. After a period of analysis, the state determined five key functionalities that the solution must employ to provide the most benefit to its users: 1) the ability to update client information, 2) a way to quickly check eligibility status, 3) a place to digitally store a client's medical ID card, 4) an intuitive and fast search for providers, and 6) easy access to health advice.

State officials worked alongside Deloitte Digital's creative designers and developers to help make this project a reality. *PEAKHealth* is an easy-to-use, state-of-the-art, bilingual mobile experience for Colorado Medicaid members. It is built on both iOS and Android platforms and as a responsive website. The mobile application is available to download for free via the Apple Store and Google Play. Members can update information, check eligibility, view their medical ID card, easily find providers, and get health tips right from their phone or computer. The mobile app reaches all Medicaid clients who have access to a smartphone or computer.

III. SIGNIFICANCE

PEAKHealth is the first Medicare application of its kind. By reaching out to clients, rather than asking clients to reach out to the state, *PEAKHealth* is a personal experience that builds positive relationships between both parties. The fast and easy access to eligibility status, account information, ID cards, and service providers means clients spend less effort on getting the answers they need right away. The project eliminates long hold times and reduces calls to centers and offices across the state. The elegant design and attention to user-friendly details encourage use, and as users can attest, *PEAKHealth* makes it easy to find answers. The application reaches all Medicaid members who have access to a computer or smartphone, allowing them to manage their account, maintain eligibility, and make healthier decisions from wherever they are. Finding a provider takes mere seconds, and carrying an electronic medical ID card on a device ensures clients will never be without it. This results in more knowledgeable and empowered members who know they can connect with the State of Colorado on a personal level, right from their mobile device.



From an operational standpoint, *PEAKHealth* reduces the volume of calls to centers and offices, which in turn helps optimize the calls that *are* handled by call centers.

PEAKHealth's features also help improve other state-mandated metrics such as:

- Improve Access to Medicaid Primary Care Providers
- Promote Well-Child Visits
- Promote Depression Screening
- Promote Preventative Dental Services to CHP+/Medicaid Kids
- Improve Client Satisfaction with Health Care Experience

PEAKHealth aligns with two key Strategic Policy Initiatives laid out by the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing: 1) Customer – “Improve health outcomes, client experience and lower per capita costs,” and 2) Technology – “Provide exceptional service through technological innovation”. These long-term strategies represent department-wide efforts to bring about strategic changes at an organizational level. *PEAKHealth* is a significant step taken to achieve the department’s goals and fulfill its mission and vision.

The *PEAKHealth* project is a valuable demonstration of the possibilities mobile applications offer for all state agencies in solving the continuous challenge of connecting with clients. In correlation with the increasing prevalence of smartphones, *PEAKHealth* paves the way for a suite of State of Colorado mobile applications that can connect with clients for all of its assistance programs.

IV. BENEFIT OF THE PROJECT

PEAKHealth is a new application on the market, but has already demonstrated its ability to save time and resources for both Medicaid clients and the state. From March 17 to May 17, 2015, the daily number of active users on weekdays increased from approximately 75 per day to 120 per day. During that same timeframe, 34 percent of users were new to the application.

The soft launch of *PEAKHealth* occurred in December 2014, with no marketing to back the new beta version – any promotion was by word-of-mouth. With high numbers of repeat-users and a steady increase in new users, it is clear that users like what they see and will continue to spread the word about *PEAKHealth*. The peak number of new users per day before March 22 was about 30. Since the official launch of *PEAKHealth*, the number of users has doubled to almost 60 new users per day. The state expects call volume to drop in correlation with a continuing increase in *PEAKHealth* users.

The repeat-usage of the application is of particular focus for the state. Over a two-week period, more than 62 percent of users used the app at least twice, and 33 percent of Coloradans have used the app five or more times. This reflects a decrease in the number of calls, but perhaps more importantly, represents a new and improved access channel for Medicaid clients. Ultimately this empowers citizens to find the answers they



need, when they need them – they no longer need to feel at odds with the state as they wait through long periods of time on the phone or at county offices.

In terms of receiving health care benefits, new users can easily search for a nearby provider right from their phone or computer. Additionally, existing users can easily find the doctors they see most and quickly find phone numbers to make appointments or view directions to visit their doctor. This means *PEAKHealth* users can more quickly access health services. Thus far, 78 users have favorited a total of 211 providers by using the provider search tool in the application.

PEAKHealth actively aligns with two of the State of Colorado's Strategic Policy Initiatives by reaching out to clients and improving their experience while obtaining information, and using innovative technology approaches to provide exceptional service. *PEAKHealth* is a significant milestone in achieving the mission of Colorado's Department of Health Care Policy and Financing – to improve healthcare access and outcomes for the people they serve.

