



Case Study: Central CSS Network - RAI-CHA August 2010

Key Results:

- Completed 1,688 RAI-CHA assessments since January 2009, which exceeded the target of 1,000.
- Implemented nine network agencies in less than a year, with another 14 expressing interest in joining; over 50 staff members from participating Central CSS Network agencies are using the GoldCare CHA instrument.
- Generated assessment protocols and standard care plans in the home for immediate planning with the client and caregivers via internet-based, wireless connection.
- Succeeded in having more comprehensive assessments and documentation, which led to earlier referrals and access to other support services for clients.
- Achieved two key Capacity Building Initiative objectives: implemented a shared client information management system and a common client assessment.
- Emerged as an early adopter of the RAI-CHA; their success in using the GoldCare CHA instrument serves as a positive example for other CSS sector agencies and LHINs to follow.

Agencies benefit from integrated access to clients' records.



OVERVIEW

Funded by the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), the Capacity Building Initiative (CBI) was developed by the Central Community Support Services Network (Central CSS Network) to address the need for infrastructure development across the community support services (CSS) sector. This mandate is supported through two key objectives: implementing a client information management system, and instituting a common client assessment.

The initiative will support an affiliation of small and large agencies offering services to the fastest growing seniors' population in Ontario: 40% over the next 10 years compared to the provincial average of 33%. The Central CSS Network is moving ahead with a collaborative and coordinated approach to continuous quality improvement and service innovation while establishing standardized systems. The project has also supported the agencies to work together to meet system-level goals of the Central LHIN.

“Of the software packages we evaluated, GoldCare was the best fit, as well as being the only solution with a comprehensive RAI-CHA instrument.”

- Deborah Egan

Another key component of this initiative was to help the CSS sector make informed decisions about program development and resource allocation. To that end, the interRAI Community Health Assessment (RAI-CHA) was selected for implementation across the Central CSS Network.

Given the groundbreaking nature of the initiative, an extensive search was launched to find an equally enterprising solution partner. A strong fit on technical functionality was just one of the Central CSS Network's specifications. Expertise in providing an integrated approach to care management and support, and a dedication to industry-advancing solutions were just as important. For the Central CSS Network, there was just one solution that met those requisites, and could successfully handle their complex infrastructure and service delivery model within a tight project timeframe: GoldCare.

GOLDCARE: THE BEST FIT FOR THE CENTRAL CSS NETWORK

GoldCare's healthcare information management software provides the CSS sector with an integrated approach to managing the client management, operational and administrative aspects of client care. Applications are centralized through an intuitive interface that provides a consistent and up-to-date view of client information within and across service agencies, while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of individual client records.

GoldCare fulfills two key objectives: it provides an integrated client information system, and an instrument for implementing a common client assessment. The latter is achieved through GoldCare's Assessment Information Manager (AIM), which provides a standardized set of tools and templates for completing assessments, including the RAI-CHA.

Developed in partnership with interRAI and the University of Waterloo, GoldCare's CHA instrument features an automated step-by-step format for quick and consistent data entry, which increases data accuracy and inter-rater reliability. GoldCare automatically calculates the Client Assessment Protocols (CAPs) and outcome scores that can be used to generate suggested care plans, track care trends, and provide comprehensive client documentation.

As Deborah Egan, Director of the Central CSS Network explains, finding a solution that met both key initiative objectives was challenging, especially on the assessment side:

"When we began the evaluation process, the RAI-CHA was already being widely endorsed by the sector as a best practice tool that can support decision-making related to client eligibility, client needs, service requirements and care planning. As such, we needed an adaptable client information management system that would allow us to manage the RAI-CHA and other assessments, as well as incorporate new

standardized assessment tools in the future. Of the software packages we evaluated, GoldCare was the best fit, as well as being the only solution with a comprehensive RAI-CHA instrument."

PILOT RESULTS EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

The Central CSS Network deployed GoldCare as an internet-based hosted solution. This provides the agencies with a cost-effective option for a "common" (shared) implementation that supports centralized data management and analysis. Additionally, agencies benefit from integrated access to their clients' records, which contribute to a network-wide approach to service planning. This wireless connection also allows assessors to generate assessment protocols and standard care plans at the point-of-care for immediate planning with the client and caregivers.

Just three months into the pilot, the benefits of conducting assessments at the point-of-care were already becoming apparent: 30 assessors completed 461 assessments, which exceeded the Central CSS Network's period target by 14%.

The RAI-CHA pilot was limited to Day Program and Supportive Housing services, where the number of Day Program assessments surpassed its target by 43%, and the Supportive Housing exceeded its target by 54%.

Just three months into the pilot, the benefits of conducting assessments at the point-of-care were already becoming apparent: 30 assessors completed 461 assessments, which exceeded the Central CSS Network's period target by 14%.

STREAMLINED AND INTUITIVE ASSESSMENT COMPLETION

These impressive numbers substantiate the most significant outcome of the pilot – more efficient and consistent completion of assessments. This results in more comprehensive information to improve metrics, service delivery and administration.

This new level of assessment thoroughness was noted and appreciated by Central CSS Network clients: "Client feedback described the assessment process as being more complete and actually led to earlier referrals and linkages to other support services," says Egan.

As Egan elaborates, consistency of assessing clients for services was another important factor that came out of the pilot: “The RAI-CHA provides a best practice standard for staff to more accurately and fairly assess clients for services, and by extension, better plan for service needs.” Being able to proactively identify client needs allows assessors to effectively plan for care needs when it is needed most.

“The RAI-CHA provides a best practice standard for staff to more accurately and fairly assess clients for services, and by extension, better plan for service needs.”

One of the main reasons for the improved assessment process was the intuitive entry format and built-in help tools provided by GoldCare’s CHA instrument. The assessment form follows a logical step-by-step approach that uses quick-entry tools such as drop-down menus, checkboxes, yes/no answers, rating scales and more for assessors to quickly answer questions about the client.

GoldCare also includes numerous quality checks to reduce data entry errors and guarantee consistency across the entire assessment. These checks can be as simple as verifying that all questions have been answered, to complex co-dependence checks across multiple responses. GoldCare generates error reports to call attention to assessments that require corrections.

INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The resulting assessment protocols, outcome scores and other outputs are displayed in the GoldCare Assessment Analysis Workspace, a web-based “home page” that consolidates key assessment information about the client. The Assessment Analysis Workspace lists the client’s active and past assessments, and compares the two most recent assessments.

Users can also generate clinical documentation and care plans from the Assessment Analysis Workspace, such as progress notes for assessment protocols triggered from the assessment. Likewise, GoldCare’s integrated Care Plan Builder is accessible through the Assessment Analysis Workspace. Whenever an assessment protocol is triggered from the completed assessment, the Care Plan





Builder creates a suggested care plan for the client. It's then just a matter of reviewing the suggested care plan for the client and individualizing it as required.

According to Egan, the Assessment Analysis Workspace provides significant time and efficiency benefits to staff conducting assessments:

"The Assessment Analysis Workspace has become an invaluable resource to agency staff conducting assessments. They're able to review assessment protocols and outcome scores quickly and easily from one place, as opposed to multiple sources, not all of which were up-to-date. Filtering and search capabilities and notification features enhance the integrated access to critical information."

LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE RAI-CHA IMPLEMENTATION

As with any project of this scale, and one with multiple stakeholders from various agencies, certain challenges arose. The Central CSS Network used these challenges as opportunities to refine the development and deployment strategies, thus contributing to the overall success of the project.

"Being an early adopter of such a groundbreaking and important project is exciting, but it also comes with the challenges and sense of responsibility of being the first to implement. There were no existing industry best practices to rely on or learn from, and in many ways we were setting a new precedent on our own," explains Egan.

Without standardized or mandated processes in place, the Central CSS Network worked cooperatively with their agencies to gain consensus for the RAI-CHA implementation and rollout plan. As Egan explains, the agencies were eager to improve client assessment and documentation, but were being cautious about the deployment itself, specifically how it would affect productivity. However, any initial trepidation was quickly dispelled as assessors began using the GoldCare CHA instrument.

Without standardized or mandated processes in place, the Central CSS Network worked cooperatively with their agencies to gain consensus for the RAI-CHA implementation and rollout plan. As Egan explains, the agencies were eager to improve client assessment and documentation, but were being cautious about the deployment itself, specifically how it would affect productivity. However, any initial trepidation was quickly dispelled as assessors began using the GoldCare CHA instrument.

"The RAI-CHA was a relatively new tool that we had introduced into our workflow, and there was an adjustment period as provider agencies became familiar with the assessment form. However, we found that using the GoldCare CHA instrument helped shorten the learning curve, and led to earlier confidence and competence among assessors in completing the new assessment form. This ease-of-use is just one reason why agencies are adopting GoldCare with such enthusiasm," says Egan.

"The Assessment Analysis Workspace has become an invaluable resource to agency staff conducting assessments. They're able to review assessment protocols and outcome scores quickly and easily from one place, as opposed to multiple sources, not all of which were up-to-date."

Recognizing the need to document and communicate implementation results and user experiences with the agencies, the Central CSS Network created an intranet site and monthly newsletter. Openly sharing information is just part of the standards and best practices the Central CSS Network is establishing to guide the rollout process and benchmark future implementations. As Egan notes, "We're in a better position now to successfully manage the next phase of the project and the influx of additional participating agencies."



ADVOCATES FOR PROVINCIAL ADOPTION OF THE RAI-CHA

With the GoldCare CHA well established and on the right track, the Central CSS Network was in a strong position when an important announcement was made in December 2009 by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) – the launch of the CSS Common Assessment Project (CSS CAP).

The CSS CAP is a strategic initiative of the MOHLTC's Community Care Information Management (CCIM) Project to establish a provincial assessment standard for the CSS sector as it relates to intake, assessment and care planning. The Central CSS Network's RAI-CHA pilot project put them in a leading role to contribute to the direction of the provincial policy and formal review process.

“We were now several months into the pilot, and had the potential to generate statistics at a level of detail that would allow the sector to present a client profile for Supportive Housing and Day programs in the Central LHIN. It will be the first time we will be able to produce that type of client profile across multiple organizations,” declares Egan. “That’s a huge accomplishment for us, one we were extremely proud of.”

Deborah Egan was named to the Provincial Steering Committee, which allowed the Central CSS Network to work closely with the CCIM Project Team as an early adopter of the RAI-CHA. This also put the spotlight on the Central CSS Network's RAI-CHA results as a model for other CSS sector agencies and LHINs to potentially follow. The importance of those results was not lost on Egan.

“We were now several months into the pilot, and had the potential to generate statistics at a level of detail that would allow the sector to present a client profile for Supportive Housing and Day programs in the Central LHIN. It will be the first time we will be able to produce that type

of client profile across multiple organizations,” declares Egan. “That’s a huge accomplishment for us, one we were extremely proud of.”

These detailed statistics and client profile will be the result of 1,688 RAI-CHA assessments the member agencies in the Central CSS Network had completed since January 2009. Once again, the Central CSS Network exceeded their target – this time by an incredible 50%.

These detailed statistics and client profile will be the result of 1,688 RAI-CHA assessments the member agencies in the Central CSS Network had completed since January 2009. Once again, the Central CSS Network exceeded their target – this time by an incredible 50%.

TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

Using GoldCare’s built-in business intelligence capabilities, the Central CSS Network is able to generate a graphical analysis and detailed reports on triggered assessment protocols, outcome scores, MAPLe scores, top diagnoses and more.

This information is translated into actionable knowledge and insights for improving care planning, effective monitoring of client progress, increasing quality of care and risk management. What’s more, this information is consolidated into a Personal Health Record, a single client data sheet that was integrated into GoldCare in partnership with the Central CSS Network.

This profile was designed to follow the standard Community Care

Access Centres (CCAC) format to support standardized processes between the CCAC and CSS sectors. The Personal Health Profile also acts as a client history that can follow the client if they’re transferred to a new care program within or outside an agency. In all, it’s data that has direct application and benefits for the Central CSS Network.

“The management reporting within GoldCare will provide the CSS sector and LHIN staff with a profile of the clients served by our sector, and a better understanding of how to improve the targeting of services related to risk management and program planning,” says Egan.

Because the Central CSS Network deployed GoldCare as a hosted internet-based solution, access to reports and other important information is fully integrated. At the agency level, staff can view and update the client’s service requirements. This method protects the privacy of individual client records, while still providing a collective and connective understanding of care needs for the entire region. GoldCare can also be configured to share client records with associated agencies as clients are referred to additional services, functionality the Central CSS Network hopes to use in the future.

As it relates to the GoldCare CHA instrument, the advantages of that interconnectivity extend throughout the entire continuum and cycle of client care.

“The GoldCare CHA instrument has the tremendous potential to be very effective throughout the full client and business cycle; from intake, assessment, documentation and care planning, to decision making and system-level planning,” affirms Egan.

LOOKING AHEAD

In May 2010, the CSS CAP officially selected the RAI-CHA as the core comprehensive assessment instrument for the CSS sector within Ontario. It’s a decision that confirms the Central CSS Network’s foresight and their commitment to improving the quality of service delivery capacity and excellence within the CSS sector.

“When you exceed your expectations in the best possible way, why would you stop there? GoldCare has the capacity to continue to develop and to provide the high level of functionality, versatility and expertise needed by the community support services sector.”

With the successful implementation of the RAI-CHA and GoldCare, the Central CSS Network has fulfilled two of the key objectives of the Capital Building Initiative – implementing a client information management system and establishing the RAI-CHA as a best practice standard. But that’s not to say the CBI is complete; far from it. As Egan summarizes, they’re already considering how GoldCare can help them meet their next goals:

“When you exceed your expectations in the best possible way, why would you stop there? GoldCare has the capacity to continue to develop and to provide the high level of functionality, versatility and expertise needed by the community support services sector.”

About the Central CSS Network

The Central Community Support Services Network, or the Central CSS Network as they're more commonly known, is an affiliation of 37 member agencies that provide services for seniors, people with physical disabilities and hospice care within the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) of Ontario. These services include Meals on Wheels, respite care, transportation, palliative care and more. In all, the Central CSS Network services over 50,000 clients in a region that spans the northern edge of the City of Toronto, a large part of York Region and southern Simcoe County.

For more information, visit www.cssnetwork.ca



GoldCare gives care providers versatile healthcare management software to efficiently manage and support the full continuum of community, residential and long-term care. Clinical, operational and administrative applications are fully integrated through an intuitive interface that provides staff with a consistent and up-to-date view of client information. This centralized access to information helps organizations to streamline workflow, reduce paperwork, increase data accuracy and improve operational efficiencies. Our multidisciplinary and integrated approach to client management, plus a dedication to industry-advancing solutions are some of the reasons why GoldCare is used by hundreds of care sites across Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

For more information, please contact
GoldCare:

Phone: 1.800.463.2688
sales@mygoldcare.com
www.mygoldcare.com