

CASE STUDY:

Tennessee Justice Center uses Salesforce to Increase Individual Healthcare Benefits by 45%

Tennessee Justice Center (TJC) is a leading non-profit community interest law firm that works to help vulnerable, low income Tennesseans. Much of TJC's work focuses on helping their clients (children and adults) gain access to healthcare by navigating the application for eligibility in the complex world of Medicaid.

In the 22 years since its inception, TJC has secured \$2 billion in health benefits for individuals. In 2017, TJC trained and supported a network of community partners that helped more than 44,600 Uninsured Tennesseans gain affordable healthcare.

As healthcare changes, technology provides answers

As the saying goes, "If you've seen one Medicaid program, you've seen one Medicaid program." The standards for eligibility and the programs themselves vary widely state to state and evolve as laws change. When the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was established, it attempted to streamline categories for enrollment across the country by basing eligibility on Modified Adjusted Gross Income, or MAGI for certain categories.

Determining an individual's MAGI is extremely complex. In Tennessee, there are 123 different sources of income that must be considered for eligibility under its TennCare system. For TJC, training staff, interns and volunteers (called "client advocates") to navigate this system and ensure accuracy on every application was daunting.

Rob Watkins, a TJC staff attorney, discovered the challenges through his own experience as a volunteer, immediately realizing they needed a technology tool to make the process more intuitive.

75% reduction: client advocate training time

45% increase: healthcare benefit value received

>100% increase: eligibility applications completed

"I thought there must be a way to ask questions so that the answer leads you to the next logical question without having to be an expert in Medicaid or the governing IRS rules," Watkins explains.

TJC engaged Salesforce Gold Consulting Partner Virsys12 to collaborate on a solution. The result is AskJane!, a reliable, highly complex but efficient eligibility calculator, built on the Salesforce platform. Using a series of questions, AskJane! systematically categorizes applicants, identifies potential coverage, and calculates eligibility. The decision tree, logic-based flow solution boasts a "TurboTax-like" user interface, providing client advocates with critical questions to ask applicants to determine eligibility.

AskJane! screens not only for TennCare eligibility but also Medicare savings plans, premium tax credits and cost sharing reductions. It also alerts the client advocate when to seek additional technical assistance from the TJC staff for those cases that will require further analysis and ongoing monitoring.

“Virsys12 and their talented staff immediately understood the challenge and need, and they have been a true partner in making our vision a reality using the Salesforce platform.”

Rob Watkins
TJC Staff Attorney

“Our vision for AskJane! is to take our specific knowledge and understanding of public health benefits and make it widely available to others who intersect with our constituency base,” explains Watkins.

Innovative technology and societal impact - an award-winning combination

Released in-house as a beta project in January 2017, AskJane! quickly proved extremely successful.

AskJane! has reduced the time it takes to train a client advocate by 75%. What used to take twelve months, now takes only three according to TJC. This allows more to be trained and more clients helped.

This reduction in training time has allowed client advocates to successfully close more than double the number of individual cases previously possible. TJC delivered over \$6.6 million in healthcare value to individual clients— a **45% increase** — and over \$1.8 million in reimbursements to healthcare providers.

Due to the impact of AskJane!, TJC received both the Frist Foundation *Innovation in Action Award* and *The Healing Trust Catalyst for Change Award* in 2017. Watkins has been nominated as the *2018 Innovator of the Year* by the Nashville Technology Council.

Designed to be flexible and scalable

Though AskJane! was designed to help navigate Medicaid eligibility under the ACA, the solution is flexible enough to handle whatever changes may come to the law, an important factor considering the volatility and uncertainty in the U.S. healthcare market. This flexibility will also enable TJC to scale the solution to benefit other organizations, including low-budget nonprofits and potential large-budget hospital systems in the future. The team is also discussing how to adapt it for other states.

“With the application and eligibility piece streamlined by AskJane!, not only do more people get help, but we are able to identify trends and systemic issues and take them to the state to work on comprehensive solutions.” Watkins explained.

This learning and improvements will continue as the technology reveals the previously untracked data for effective decisions. And Tennessee Justice Center will continue their mission to help people gain access to the necessities of life, including healthcare.

A Multi Award-Winning Solution:

- *Frist Foundation Innovation in Action Award, 2017*
- *The Healing Trust Catalyst for Change Award, 2017*
- *2018 Innovator of the Year* nomination for Rob Watkins by the Nashville Technology Council