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Document management system allows employees to access policies, trainings, and data anytime, anywhere

By: Howard M. Goldberg, Chief Quality and Compliance Officer, Institute for Community Living. Administrative Surveyor, CARF International

In New York State, the behavioral health field is governed by a large assortment of laws and regulations to ensure that consumers are being treated in the best possible way and in accordance with government-approved practices. The amount of regulations, including their frequent updates, poses a challenge for organizations to ensure that employees are up-to-date on the latest rules and trainings and have access to the most current version of policies. This becomes especially difficult when a large portion of an organization's employees is rarely in an office and isn't readily able to log on to agency networks.

That was the challenge faced by [ICL](#), a behavioral health agency that has more than 1,000 employees spread across the five boroughs of New York City and as far away as Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. In addition to a large number of remote employees, ICL offers many programs and services that each have their own set of policies that need ongoing review, updating, and cataloging. To address the issue of keeping remotely stationed employees up-to-date on regulations and policies relevant to these service areas, senior policy and compliance staff at ICL began to investigate document management systems.

After sifting through numerous requests for proposals (RFPs) and meeting with a number of different companies offering document management systems, ICL chose the services of [PowerDMS](#), which

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offers a system that meets most of ICL's needs. Other systems considered by the ICL team included [NAVEX PolicyTech Software](#) and [Medworxx](#). The ICL team was looking for a solution that would enable essential documents to be organized, accessed remotely, and tracked to see who viewed them. ICL's criteria included having a repository where it could put content, including documents, trainings, procedure statements, contracts, and leases. ICL needed the content to be web based so that employees wouldn't have to log on to ICL's network to access it. ICL also wanted to be able to edit the documents online (rather than having to upload revised documents) and gather feedback from employees.

In addition to meeting the requirements listed above, the document management system enables ICL to create workgroups so that specific documents can be shown to select people. These workgroups allow participants to create workflows, edit drafts, and involve key people in the process. The ICL Board of Directors, for example, has its own dedicated section within the system that allows members to remain up-to-date on company activities. The system also offers the ability to create temporary access. This is helpful for CARF surveyors to access documents that ICL is using and sharing with its employees.

By implementing these processes, ICL has seen improvement in efficiency as employees are able to retrieve policy and training information without having to contact a supervisor or the Department of Quality. ICL is also able to quantitatively measure how many employees access the system, allowing it to better hold them accountable. ICL continues to improve on the documents that it shares with employees, noting recently that hyperlinks can be added so staff can click to find explanations for specific policies. Even YouTube videos can be added into the system. ICL's document management system has become a vital tool that ICL uses to help people get better.

In 2015, ICL received exemplary recognition from [CARF](#) for its effective use of the document management system to improve communication, information sharing, and potential outcomes. The exemplary said, in part, that ICL's positive use of the system "significantly increases the availability and accessibility of all business data, organizational information, policies, and procedures. This important investment helps to improve access to data for all staff members."

There are numerous off-the-shelf document management systems available for companies of different sizes. In addition to the options considered by ICL, others can be located quickly using an internet search. For further information about ICL's document



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management system, contact Howard Goldberg at
hgoldberg@iclinc.net or (212) 385-3037.

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