

C&CS Assistance Reporting Tool (ART), DoD, TMA

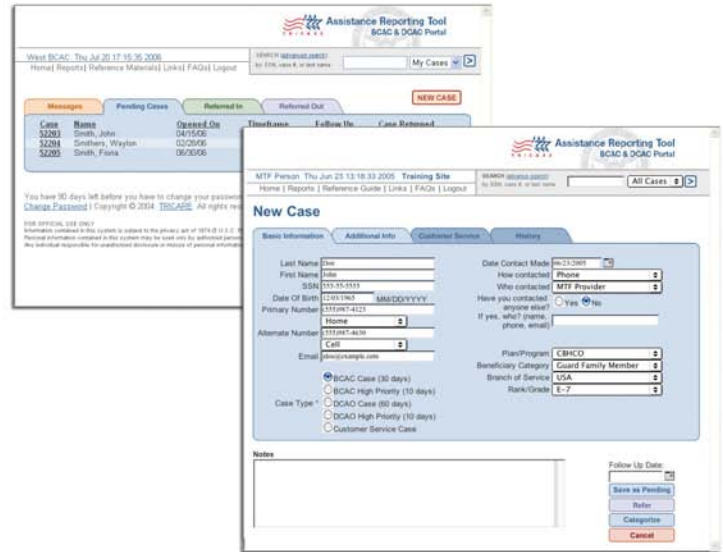
The Challenge

The Department of Defense (DoD) TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) Communications & Customer Service (C&CS) Directorate has a broad scope of responsibility. The Customer Communications Division (CCD) Team, a division of C&CS, is responsible for Debt Collection Assistance Officers (DCAOs) and Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs) for the military healthcare system at all levels of the organizational structure. The CCD group needed an application that could provide better customer service and case management capabilities by capturing beneficiary demographic and case information, sharing information, and allowing users to report on the data collected. Because users would be located all over the world, and in some cases without access to a .mil system, it was necessary that the application be Web-based. This application had to meet the strict security standards set by DIACAP (DoD Information Assurance Certification and Accreditation Process) and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) policies for protecting patient data. In addition, the application had to be Section 508-compliant, meaning that the site is accessible to people with disabilities.

Our Strategy

In response to the program requirements of C&CS and the CCD group, the Keymind Division of Axiom designed and developed the Assistance Reporting Tool (ART). ART is an easy-to-use, secure Web application that captures and reports on all the key information captured by BCAC, DCAO and customer service users. Information can be entered, saved for later work, and referred to other users to assist in case resolution. The site was built using Oracle 9i and Microsoft ASP.NET technologies. Because of the volume of data that can be entered into the system and the number of users worldwide, a main goal of the project was to be sure that the application was clean and easy to use. This was accomplished by using clear navigation and color cues throughout the system as well as conducting usability sessions with BCAC/DCAO users to optimize the workflow prior to launch. Keymind built a tutorial site to accompany the main site, so that new users could self-learn the system without compromising the data within the site. The tutorial site also includes security training, links to frequently asked questions (FAQs), and important reference links.

Keymind's team for this effort comprised a project manager, information architect, graphic interface designer, content strategist, database developer, programmers, network



engineers, and a security officer. Keymind was also responsible for setting up the government servers for development and staging environments. The team completed security lockdowns for the operating system and the application and documented the system prior to ushering it onto the government network.

The Impact

Keymind succeeded in building a secure site that met the needs of the BCAC, DCAO, and TMA community. The new ART application has consolidated beneficiary case collection and customer service feedback for all TRICARE customer service personnel worldwide. With the use of the ART site, C&CS is able to track trends and issues, allowing for marketing and education efforts that are targeted specifically to beneficiaries. The initial release of the ART application was deployed worldwide in 2004 and currently supports more than 700 users with over 150,000 cases. The ART system is also being utilized by TRIWEST, the West region's Managed Care Support contractor, as well as Express Scripts, the TRICARE pharmacy contractor and claims adjudicators. The addition of these audiences has allowed for a more secure and expeditious processing of beneficiary claims and also allows military treatment facilities (MTFs), regional representatives, and TMA users to refer cases via a secure method.

Future

The ART has been successful due to over 300 upgrades and changes, a great many of these from user input and suggestions. The C&CS team was recently provided with funding for the development of an ad-hoc reporting function. This will greatly increase the details of the reports and the power of ART and will vastly improve trend analysis for all users of the tool.