



success stories

Client: Sandhills Center for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services ("Sandhills Center")

Partner: Docufree

Challenges

Sandhills Center provided and now manages behavioral healthcare services across nine counties, which led to the receipt and storage of over 500,000 medical and human resource files. These records were in the form of paper, film, and microfiche from multiple locations across the region.

In 2016, Sandhills Center reached out to Docufree seeking help to manage records for not only their own medical record files, but also providers which had closed their offices and left Sandhills Center with ownership of their records. The growing number of people applying for Gun and Concealed Weapon Carry Permits from local Sheriff's Offices, combined with the volume of medical records maintained, put the team at Sandhills Center in a position to reevaluate how they were managing records. It was taking the staff at Sandhills Center extra time and expense to get their hands on records in order to fulfill requests, due to the fact that some records were stored on microfilm and others in paper files across multiple storage locations. As provider

"Docufree helped us significantly mitigate risk and exposure allowing us to better manage all of our records."

Evelyn Quick - Chief Legal Officer/Chief Compliance Officer,
Sandhills Center

offices closed, Sandhills continued to inherit records which added to the challenge of tracking what records were located where, and in what format.

To add to the perfect storm of challenges, Sandhills Center and Docufree identified a significant portion of the records in storage that had already met their retention schedules. Maintaining records past their retention schedules added to cost of storing records, while adding legal risk and exposure by potentially having to produce records that should have been destroyed. Also, due to several mergers and other transitions, patient files were being stored in different places, creating challenges for producing complete medical records.

Typically, medical records and human resource files contain highly confidential and sensitive information, thus records must be secure in order to maintain patient and employee privacy. Due to the consolidation of behavioral health organizations across the region and the increase in concealed weapon permit applications, it became more challenging and time-consuming to locate the necessary documents and also prevented Sandhills Center from efficiently destroying records as their retention schedules were met – a particularly difficult challenge given the possibility of

individuals having multiple records from different sources. Resource limitations and growing demand for records exacerbated the existing problems.

Solution

Docufree picked up all patient records and human resource files from numerous facilities in multiple formats. Using highly trained staff and proprietary software, every file was tagged by the Docufree Data Acquisition team with key demographic information and dates to determine if the file should be retained or destroyed based on the document type and retention schedule. Files were separated accordingly, and a complete database was created containing every Sandhills Center Record, including retention collateral, and disposition instructions.

For the records that fell within the retention window, Docufree prepared each file (paper and microfilm) for scanning by identifying the critical document types, key demographic information, and retention period. These records were then digitally captured at the highest quality level, with a 100% quality control on all scanned data. The resulting digital data was packaged, and securely delivered via SFTP to Sandhills for upload to their document management software.

“Docufree provided solutions for every challenge we threw their way, which allowed continued compliance with HIPAA while maintaining a disaster recovery plan for our most critical records.”

*-Evelyn Quick - Chief Legal Officer/Chief Compliance Officer,
Sandhills Center*

To drive continuity, quality, and efficiency, Docufree assigned a dedicated production team across 2 shifts to manage each phase of the process. Outsourcing the scanning and the data acquisition process to Docufree allowed Sandhills the flexibility to focus on their core business functions without adding staff and infrastructure. The chain of custody is secure. Expedited scanning is a core business function of Docufree.

About Docufree

Docufree is a business process services provider of large-volume document scanning, cloud-based document management, and intelligent process automation. Since 1999, Docufree has securely managed and modernized how people and the systems they use every day interact with data and each other, driving measurable outcomes for both clients and their customers—from providing an on-ramp to digital transformation to automated invoice processing, human resources and customer communications.

About Sandhills Center

Sandhills Center is a Local Management Entity-Managed Care Organization (LME-MCO) serving people in nine counties in central North Carolina. Sandhills Center has a robust network of providers who offer treatment and support for mental health, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

It is the goal of Sandhills Center to make treatment options available to those who need them, to enrich and support our Provider Network, and to contribute to the overall well-being of the communities we serve.

To learn more about Sandhills Center please visit their website at www.sandhillscenter.org.

Key Benefits:

- Decreased document request turnaround process from several steps to one
- Mitigated risk by destroying 215,000 files that had already met their retention schedules
- Saved what was the equivalent to 2 Full Time Employees labor costs
- Reclaimed 12,000 cubic feet of storage space
- Ensured security of records and HIPAA Compliance
- Cost Avoidance of \$1.6m by only needing to scan 26% of the files
- Eliminated 100% of physical onsite storage of records
- Consolidated 100% of records into one centralized repository
- Eliminated obsolete technology by digitizing microfilm