

MARWORTH & SEQUEST:
TWO TEAMS DEDICATED TO ONE GOAL.

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Background

Marworth of Waverly, PA is one of the leading substance abuse treatment centers in the United States. Established in 1982, its long successful history of delivering both inpatient and outpatient care to the addicted is well recognized within its home state of Pennsylvania, as well as nationally. Marworth is a part of the Geisinger Health System and is accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs (BDAP).



The Journey

In January 2005, the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, NAATP organized a Software Summit in San Antonio, TX. They realized many of their members were facing the same dilemma as Marworth. The Summit brought together fourteen of the most prominent vendors in behavioral health and addiction treatment software. Attending the conference from Marworth were Bob Fernandez, IT Coordinator and Dominic Vangarelli, MA, Counseling Coordinator. They arrived at the conference with a clear set of specifications about what they were interested in with an EMR.

The Summit allowed Marworth to compare fourteen applications side by side and review each of their capabilities. Many vendors did not offer MAR, a key must-have for Marworth. Other companies were too focused on acute care for the Marworth business line and therefore would require serious and costly modifications. Still others were priced for a hospital at nearly \$500,000. Dominic and Bob maintained their goal of finding the right solution for Marworth and left San Antonio with a list of three potential candidates.

The process continued for Marworth with an in-depth demonstrations from the three vendors at their facility. This would allow the entire team to view the product as well as interact with vendor staff. The three were reviewed in depth, and, again, each member of the team was encouraged to process and discuss their opinions in coordination with the leadership team. After the final analysis, Sequest proved to be the right solution for Marworth.

What Made Sequest The Right Solution?

The TIER® Solutions Platform from Sequest offered similar screens to Marworth's previous software. It provided an opportunity to expand needed clinical assessments, treatment planning and counseling notes. One major value TIER® brought was Marworth no longer needed to rely on a vendor for changes and modifications, but could easily manage it themselves. Other vendors claimed they could do the same, but only Sequest demonstrated just how easy it was to change things. This feature excited Marworth as they frequently needed to add and change data to meet accreditation standards.

The flow and the process of TIER® made sense. It was easy for first time viewers to follow. Sequest was the only one in behavioral health/addiction software that had an established history with computerized physician orders and medication administration record (MAR). This was vital to Marworth. The nursing team administers a considerable amount of medication to patients and they needed the ability to track it electronically. TIER® also offered a billing system that would meet the needs of Marworth and eliminate duplicative data entry into the hospital system for admissions and billing. The ability for Marworth to generate and provide management with accurate and timely financial reporting was of great value and factored into their selection of TIER®.

Marworth realized the choice of a software vendor was as much about the vendor as the software. Marworth learned a lot about the Sequest team on several levels during the selection process. Sales staff provided demos throughout the selection process, and Marworth leadership also had the opportunity to meet and get to know Sequest leadership through Sequest's work within the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers (NAATP).

Marworth not only became comfortable with the technical prowess of Sequest, but also with the character of their people. These factors were critical. Dominic Vangarelli put it this way, "We wanted to make sure this was a group we felt we could have a relationship with."

The Implementation

From planning to implementation, the entire process was a total team effort between Marworth and Sequest. The team was meeting five days a week between the final stages of implementation and going live. The team continued to meet on a regular basis depending on the phase of the project; sometimes twice a day during challenging times. In addition to team meetings and onsite trainings/meetings, the project was governed by an implementation plan that dictated tasks, timelines and assignments. This plan was communicated to all, including executive management of both partners, on a bi-monthly basis. It was understood that success was a collaborative goal of both teams.

The early stages of implementation, training, installation and requirements gathering went extremely well. Sequest developed extensive changes to clinical and financial modules and delivered an initial system for testing in March 2006. The Marworth team began an extensive testing regime for both systems. Sequest deliverables were accepted and tested initially as successful. Outpatient and inpatient counseling went live with minimal issues.

Still, an implementation of this size will always have challenges. The first challenge arose in the nursing system. It seemed once the system accumulated significant medication data and patient load, the medication administration record began to slow and freeze. Nurses would attempt to access screens and the system would crawl to open. Sequest and Marworth began immediate analysis to determine the source of the issue. Many aspects of the system were examined, including the hardware and the network. The initial analysis brought changes, but regrettably not a solution. Sequest and Marworth were in constant communication as the nature of the issue lent itself to many possible sources and both sides needed to proceed to eliminate any and all possibilities.

To further complicate the process, some attempted fixes actually caused other issues. This 'ripple effect' had Marworth concerned about future unexpected problems. Every day the teams worked together and the solutions were forthcoming within a few days. There were extensive new designs delivered to Marworth that combined all nursing duties into one screen, a nursing console.

This new design also caused delays, but not to the scale of the previous situation. Still the nursing staff was not satisfied with the early days of this new software package. To iron out the problems, Marworth and Sequest created a 'punch list' that incorporated both 'fixes' and new items that were uncovered by users. The teams worked methodically through each and every issue until the system was 100%. The implementation process was filled with back and forth communications. There were hundreds of opportunities for miscommunication which could have strained the relationship, if not handled well.

**“ This relationship is like a marriage,
it requires that level of commitment and care. ”**

Jim Dougherty, Vice President / CEO, Marworth.

Communication between Marworth and Sequest was key. Marworth team members were copied on all aspects of TIER® work activity, allowing all staff to be regularly updated. Not only did the Marworth team attend meetings to provide feedback and work through implementation issues, but they also maintained their day-to-day responsibilities to patients. An impressive example of dedication and professionalism.

Another excellent example of communication and testing was witnessed during the financial installation. Marworth needed to demonstrate to the Geisinger Health System that changing from the health system's billing to the Marworth package would not jeopardize the recording of revenue. Marworth and Sequest financial resources met every morning for a 3 month period verifying the financial reports in TIER® compared to Geisinger's system. Each charge that was out of line was investigated and assessed as to its origin and reason for difference. This required a good deal of vigilance from both parties and after a period of several months running concurrently, Geisinger signed off on the transition to the TIER® financial module.

Marworth also considered well organized training to be a critical part of the implementation. All staff was involved in their 'Training Wheels' program where they were given access to TIER® and trained on all aspects of the system. The application was familiar to Marworth's clinical process, so staff found the learning process very smooth. The Marworth team also provided their staff with laminated 'How to Sheets' that showed each discipline their most frequent tasks in TIER®. Several end users reported the tool was very beneficial. The outpatient facility had entered several initial patients and was so pleased they continued to move all clients into the database within a few days.

“ The Marworth team was absolutely extraordinary in their efficiency, professionalism, partnership and diligence. They managed their processes and aspects of implementation like the seasoned veterans they are. It was a true pleasure to partner with this team. ”

Bill Connors, President / CEO, Sequest

March 2006

▶ Customized system installed

May-June 2006

▶ Final updates to TIER

June 2006

▶ End-user training begins

June 20, 2006

▶ First patient in TIER

August 21, 2006

▶ All patients in TIER

October 2006

▶ Finance parallel testing begins

March 2007

▶ Finance Live

The Results

Celebrating 3 years live throughout their operation, the TIER® Solutions Platform has continued to grow in value for Marworth. Sequest added the ability to connect to external signature pads, as well as for Marworth to design new forms with secure signature blocks within the forms. Following detailed testing, Marworth implemented treatment plans, releases of information, consents and many other one time only paper documents, using the secure signature pad. No longer do Marworth professionals have to search for a 'hard copy' release in a medical record which has been signed out to another team member. They simply access the medical record at their computer in their office to view or initiate a release.

“I get easy access to current documentation versus searching for a hard chart. There's also the timeliness and reflection of progress notes to treatment plan goals.” Susan G., Utilization Review.

The admissions department has found TIER® to be a tremendous time-saver since coming to their desktops. The staff was previously responsible for doing dual entry of admissions, as well as financial charge data. TIER® cut admission time in half. Maria Kolcharno, Director of Admissions, has also enjoyed the ability of producing extremely detailed and meaningful reports from TIER®. A valuable new asset for her department.

The ability for Marworth to customize TIER® is a huge help. For example, during a JCAHO survey, Marworth incorporated recommended changes to a document in real time during the survey process. Upon later review by the surveyor, they were impressed with how efficiently TIER® could be modified. Overall, the surveyor was impressed with Marworth's electronic records system. One surveyor said, ***"This is the way a record should look"***.

Security with Marworth's new TIER® system is very powerful. They can manage down to the field element allowing clinician access only to the information management believes is needed.

"We have extensive reporting ability. I can get to anything I need within the record and quickly report on it to management." said Bob Fernandez.

The most recent exciting addition to Marworth's TIER® system is voice dictation. Marworth had two clinicians test the use of Dragon Naturally Speaking software connected to TIER®. Dominic Vangarelli has been using it for several months and has become the envy of the other clinicians. "I love it! It works great!" reported Dominic.



"As exceptional as my team is in the fields of counseling, nursing and finance, the Sequest team was equally skilled in their areas of expertise."

Jim Dougherty, Vice President/CEO, Marworth.



Marworth and Sequest continue to collaborate on solutions that will assist and increase Marworth's use of TIER®. Three members of the Marworth team: Dominic Vangarelli, Bob Fernandez and Noel Tollock, travel to Chicago once a year to join Sequest for the National Users Conference. Marworth is one of many participants that learn as well as teach while at the conference. The relationship continues to grow in value for both Marworth and Sequest, as should all relationships. Marworth has helped many other Sequest clients with their ideas on successful implementation and continued business growth using the TIER® Solutions Platform.

