




WHITEPAPER

SUCCESS IN HOME CARE

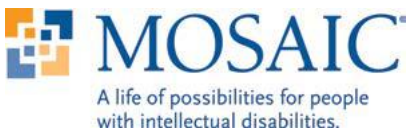
How a modern technology platform enabled Mosaic to proactively drive speed and compliance across 36 agencies in 10 states

As home care agencies fight for survival in today's increasingly competitive climate, many need the modern tools and resources a technology solution provides to streamline onboarding and administration processes. Furthermore, as the caregiver shortage continues to become more prominent and competition more acute, independent caregiver management tools can provide home care organizations—like Mosaic—with the competitive edge they need to thrive in today's environment. Learn how Mosaic migrated more than 600 host home independent caregivers into a new, automated system, allowing them to better respond, grow, and succeed in home care.



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-Keith Schmode, SVP of Mission Fulfillment, MOSAIC



When Mosaic decided to incorporate independent caregivers, the senior leadership team knew about the labor shortages, minimum wage issues, and health care reform challenges facing home care agencies. But Mosaic was mainly thinking about its clients.

As senior vice president of mission fulfillment at Mosaic, a nonprofit that services people with intellectual disabilities, Keith Schmode had seen the research. Mosaic’s clients slept better, ate better and generally did better with independent caregivers in host homes.

“Being able to focus on a person or two people as opposed to six and all the shift changes that entails makes a tremendous difference,” Schmode says.

But Mosaic also knew that with more than 36 agencies across 10 states, what was good for their clients could be “catastrophic” for the organization—unless independent caregivers’ contracts and compensations were managed efficiently. That’s when Mosaic turned to Openforce.

> ABOUT MOSAIC

Mosaic provides a life of possibilities for people with intellectual disabilities through supports which are tailored to the individual’s needs and desires. We support people to define their own happiness. We ask people how they like to spend their day, what they love to do in their spare time, where they want to live and goals they would like to achieve. Then we partner with them to make those things happen.

Founded: 1913

Headquarters: Omaha, NE

Mosaic supports: More than 3,700

Locations: 36 agencies in 10 states

Website: www.mosaicinfo.org



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By using Openforce technology solutions, Mosaic was able to transition more than 600 host home independent caregivers into the new system, with the ability to grow significantly over the next year.

“I feel very relieved to have pushed through the other side,” he says. “It went more smoothly than I expected. And we feel like we’re proactive and on the cutting edge of the home care industry.”

HOME CARE TRENDS

Unfortunately, many less proactive home care agencies are in for a much bumpier ride. That’s because home care is hitting two disruptive trends: a rapidly escalating need for more caregivers and a seismically shifting labor landscape that makes finding independent caregivers more difficult than ever. And unlike Mosaic, many agencies haven’t yet embraced technology to help address these issues head on.

At the same time, the home care industry is like a runaway freight train. Considering the increased demand for senior care, the \$55 billion industry is already one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. And that growth is projected to skyrocket. In fact, by 2040, the number of Americans 85 or older will more than double to 14.6 million, while the 65-plus population will rise nearly 60 percent to 82.3 million, according to U.S. Census figures.

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-Amy Rulli, Director of Business Development, Openforce

Add to that the fact that a growing number of people are living with one or more chronic illness—arthritis, diabetes or Alzheimer’s among them—with a desire to age in place, and you’ve got an industry set for tremendous growth. In fact, by 2024, home care is projected to add 633,100 new jobs. That’s more jobs than any other single occupation, according to PHI’s U.S. Home Care Workers report.

Turning to a Technology-Driven Solution

But there are alternative solutions and new technologies allowing agencies to adopt more flexible models, best business practices and automated processes.

“A lot of agencies think using independent caregivers is not as good for the workers. That’s not necessarily the case. They can work more hours because they’re not restricted, negotiate pay assignments, and work for multiple agencies. They have more options. For agencies, independent caregivers offer a way to retain higher quality workers. They can give them more hours and pay more, because they have less overhead,” Rulli says.



Organizations like Mosaic are discovering that navigating this new world of independent contracting isn't easy, especially when managed with error-prone, manual processes. If the contracting process is not managed correctly, independent caregivers can put agencies at risk for penalties, warns Amy Rulli, Director of Business Development, Openforce.

What's more she adds, many home care agencies are grossly misinformed about the independent caregiver model. "They don't fully understand the nuances or fundamentals when it comes to using independent caregivers. Many mistakenly think it's illegal," Rulli says.

Home care industry leaders agree that the current model is rapidly being outmoded—and agencies that try to stick with it may well be put out of business especially in the new political climate. "The current momentum by providers to embrace the independent caregiver model is not surprising as the Trump administration prepares to roll back regulations and considers Medicaid block grants," says Wendy Swager, CEO of Soreo and Chair of Arizona's Leadership Committee for the National Federation of Independent Businesses.

Focus on Compliance

A good place to start incorporating the independent caregiver model is with a modern technology platform. The best solutions offer built-in IC infrastructure that helps navigate challenges and mitigate risk. At the same time, using technology and automated solutions can reduce operating costs and help match service capacity with patient needs. "It really enables agencies to grow their business," Rulli says.

Additionally, home care agencies must ensure their business practices are structured for the independent caregiver relationships and are in accordance with state and federal laws. "It is critical that any business carefully considers all the legal and compliance ramifications before adopting the model," Swager warns.

At the federal level, the Department of Labor published its "economic realities" test to determine employee or independent caregiver status. The IRS has outlined worker classification rules in its "common law 20-factor" test. Both agencies advise that any and all information providing evidence of the degree of control and independence will be taken into consideration. At the state level it's a different story. Laws differ significantly from one state to another, which is why universal solutions consistently fail to be compliant.

But, that doesn't mean compliance is impossible—especially for those who turn to a technology-driven solution. Implementing best practices for your organization and state when using independent caregivers is critical to increase your level of compliance and help mitigate risk.

Leveraging technology allows agencies to take a proactive approach. Additionally, implementing a tailored solution to ensure your best practices are consistently followed through custom-built workflows helps you work smarter, reduce risk, and streamline operations.





PROACTIVE VS. REACTIVE

A FEW BEST PRACTICES: 3 WAYS TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS CAN HELP YOU STREAMLINE YOUR COMPLIANCE PRACTICES



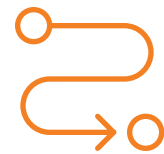
Prescreen Independent Caregivers

Posting vacancies on recruitment sites, manually reviewing each candidate, and evaluating qualifications is a cumbersome process that leaves many agencies struggling to move independent caregivers through this process and into the field. By implementing an automated prescreening process, organizations can leverage various compliance workflows according to certifications, locations, and a variety of other screening services to expedite the vetting process. This helps ensure that caregivers are compliant and qualified to provide services prior to allocating valued time and resources to move them to onboarding.



Navigate Negotiations

Treating independent caregivers as an extension of the agency rather than as a separate business entity can lead to costly compliance violations. Recording the negotiation process prevents exploitation of either entity and minimizes potential compliance issues. Leveraging software with an interactive negotiation platform provides a neutral landscape to digitally capture the negotiation interaction. If the negotiating parties establish a deal or contract using this type of solution, the agreement is documented with clearly established terms that are acceptable for each of the negotiating parties.



Establish an Audit Trail

Regulations, labor laws, litigation and audits are constantly in the media. As such, providers need to ensure the defensibility of their compliance strategies. Clear implementation of best practices and documentation of those practices are essential components to withstand regulatory scrutiny. Having a complete end-to-end audit trail tracking the entire independent caregiver interaction lifecycle can seem like an arduous process. But with caregiver management software, agencies can digitally track necessary interactions to provide supporting evidence of its compliance plan and limit vulnerabilities.

Modernize Operations: Meet Internal & External Demands

While leveraging independent caregivers can support a more agile and flexible business model, high turnover rates among independent caregivers often leads to time-consuming manual onboarding and administrative processes for agencies. Agencies are often required to go through the lengthy and tedious process of onboarding new independent caregivers on a recurring continuous basis. As agencies fight for survival in today's increasingly competitive climate, many need the modern tools and resources a technology solution provides to streamline onboarding and administration processes.

Caregiver management software allows home care companies to onboard independent caregivers in support of compliance to streamline business processes while reducing cost and risk from their operations to:

“Most home care agencies don't realize that they have to negotiate rates for services,” Rulli warns. “The independent caregiver payment model is very different. They need to be able to document negotiations and show that rates weren't dictated by the agency.”

- **Remove** the burdens of back-office administration and accelerate onboarding and processing related to pay with real-time verifications. “We provide the framework to manage that business model,” Rulli says.
- **Capture** contractual and compliance documentation in an automated, web-based environment with the ability to create custom enrollment workflows that can accommodate a variety of complex compliance requirements. “In health care they have to have all these certifications: CPR, TB testing etc.,” Rulli says. “And home care agencies have to know when every single independent caregivers' certifications are expiring. Otherwise they can be fined.”
- **Track** back-and-forth communication in an audit trail, and capture the final negotiated rate safeguarding both parties from any 'hearsay' issues related to the agreement. “Leveraging our infrastructure to incorporate best business practices means home care agencies are better prepared to produce evidence as related to various tests used by state and federal agencies.” added Rulli.





“ We couldn’t have done it without Openforce. There’s just so much built into the software that provides the firewalls needed to help ensure compliance,” Schmode says. ”

Thanks to its ability to alleviate the burdens of onboarding, payment processing, back-office administration, and compliance workflows — while also incorporating industry best practices for providers using independent caregivers — caregiver management software has become increasingly popular among home care organizations. But many are still laboring under old models, Rulli says. “Some critical processes may still be manual,” she explains. “They may be learning about technology solutions for the first time and they’re nervous about it.”

But as the workforce shortage continues to become more prominent and competition more acute, independent

caregivers can provide home care organizations with the supplemental resources they need to thrive in today’s environment. Not only do independent caregivers provide additional support, but they also allow organizations to alleviate a great deal of the operational burdens today’s provider face. That was certainly true for Mosaic.

We couldn’t have done it without Openforce. There’s just so much built into the software that provides the firewalls needed to help ensure compliance. It would have taken us hundreds of hours to try to do it ourselves,” Schmode says, adding, “We wanted to do things the right way.



KEITH SCHMODE

Mosaic

Keith Schmode is Senior Vice President of Mission Fulfillment and previously served as Mosaic's Senior Vice President of Mission Advancement from 2006-2015. Prior to his time at Mosaic, Keith was the Managing Partner for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in the Nebraska Region. He brings 20 years of social service experience as well as 20 years of financial planning experience to Mosaic. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and a Master of Social Work from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

> ABOUT OPENFORCE

Openforce is the leading provider of technology-enabled services that reduce the operating costs and compliance risk for companies that utilize independent contractors.

- Trusted by more than 60,000 companies and independent contractors
- Outsourced provider of onboarding, contracting, and settlement processing for contracting companies
- Tools and services partner for independent contractors to help sustain and grow their businesses
- Processed over \$1 billion in settlements annually

We realize the unique challenges that companies face when utilizing independent caregivers. It's at the core of our business, and we help solve for it with our leading technologies and industry experts.



Learn more at www.oforce.com
