

Case Study: Rice Home Medical

Carol Laumer, Executive Director



The Problem: Achieving Lean Goals

Rice Home Medical (www.ricehomemedical.com) has been serving west central Minnesota for more than 20 years. The full-line HME company features specialty departments that focus on respiratory, high-end rehab and sleep apnea.

With five Minnesota locations in Wilmar, Madison, Glennwood, Redwood Falls and Alexandria, Rice Home Medical realized it had a problem. It had tons of paperwork and managing all of it was getting out of hand. Rice Home Medical's executive director, Carol Laumer, active in the healthcare industry for more than 20 years and a major advocate of the HME industry, decided it was necessary to update the company's system.

The Solution: Getting a Grip on the Paper

In order to continue operating at the levels she expected, things needed to get leaner. The company had to tighten operations to move closer to her "lean goals." She recognized the company had too many original documents flowing from person to person through numerous departments. Patient charts, deposits and invoices had to be organized, filed and distributed. It was becoming too cumbersome, and costly.

MedFORCE Technologies had the solution for Rice Home Medical: MedFORCE Scan, the HIPAA-compliant paperless office software. MedFORCE Scan provides a complete document management solution to scan patient records, create / import electronic forms, import faxes, track UPS deliveries and much more. The company decided to implement MedFORCE Scan and also uses MedFORCE's D&R Manager, a powerful denial management and reimbursement tool that helps manage denials and automatically creates re-determination cover sheets for follow-up with supporting documentation.

The Methodology: Making it Work

"Implementing MedFORCE's technology made us look at all of our processes and helped open doors into the virtual work world. It prompted us to look at the forms we use that were hand-written and replace them with electronic forms from MedFORCE's Form Designer. That enabled more of our documents to be filed automatically with MedFORCE's powerful auto-filing technology," Laumer said. "Because we have five different locations, MedFORCE's solutions have given us the ability to have numerous people look at the same file at the same time, allowing our customer service and billing staff to have conversations with the necessary documents conveniently in front of them."

Implementing MedFORCE's technology has already brought measurable savings to the company. "MedFORCE's web-based technology has been very easy to deal with. It is seamless, all of our locations have quick access to MedFORCE without any delay, and best of all we didn't need to buy or maintain servers or have to be concerned about backups or upgrades," Laumer said. "In looking to the future, MedFORCE's web-based technology could help us to keep our 'stay-at-home parent' employed. Rather than losing a highly-trained employee and have addi-

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tional turnover, MedFORCE Online will enable us to create a model for people to work from home."

Rice Home Medical now operates more efficiently and has moved Carol closer to her goals. Prior to implementing MedFORCE deposits and invoices from vendors were filed by A/P and finance, the file clerk was only responsible for filing the patient documentation. Now our file clerk can manage all the filing and keep all the filing current.

Staff no longer has to rummage through cabinets looking for a purchase order or an invoice from a specific deposit. They are able to find them quickly and efficiently right in MedFORCE," Laumer said. "Our file clerk no longer has to organize papers being sent to her for filing before filing the documents. There's no backlog of papers and we can always find what we need. We've been able to reduce our file clerk's hours even though we have added the filing for more departments to her regular workload which once only consisted of patient charts."

Some might have seen it as a sign of divine intervention. Some might have called it luck. Regardless, shortly after implementing the MedFORCE solutions, Rice Home Medical had a site visit at a branch location from the State Board of Pharmacy. The inspector from the board requested a current prescription.

"My staff was able to retrieve the file and it was in the inspector's hands in less than a minute. We didn't have to dig through paper files and we didn't have to call the corporate office where all the original documents were stored," Laumer said. "The inspector was very impressed with our organization!"

The Results: More Time to Help Others

The HME business is very much part of the healthcare industry and Carol has always viewed her role as one of offering more than products, but support. Laumer

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*Carol Laumer, Executive Director
Rice Home Medical*

participates in both state and national associations, in lobbying efforts and as a champion for home care as a cost-effective and patient-centered solution.

"We are an industry of service," Laumer said. "MedFORCE Technologies has helped me on my mission to help not only our customers, but our own people, by easing the burdens placed upon them and making their jobs easier."

Over the years, Laumer has had her share of unique stories: the time when she was able to provide an apnea monitor for a baby's ride back to Texas where he was to undergo heart surgery; or the time she was able to provide a walker for a Russian Dignitary who suffered a stroke while in her community (she doesn't even speak Russian); or the countless times she's helped provide a hospital bed and oxygen so hospice patients can be comfortable in their final days. With MedFORCE at her side, helping her team access important documents no matter where they are, she looks forward to continuing to serve her community with the same zeal and enthusiasm, just now with much more efficiency.

**For More Information about MedFORCE Scan
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