

AMH Electronic Filing System

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Executive summary of the initiative

The Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) Division implemented an Electronic Filing System (EFS) in 2007 intended to significantly reduce the quantity of paper files throughout the division. The implementation was never fully completed, leaving 1,200 paper files out of the system. This event focused on mapping out a streamlined process and a plan to complete the electronic filing system implementation and decrease the back log of paper files from 1,200 paper files to 0 paper files by June 30, 2009. The event team and the AMH Support Team successfully met their goal of eliminating the paper file back log on time. The new process reduced their cycle time by 81%, and avoids \$6, 749.48 in costs.

Improvement summary

In October 2008, a process improvement event was held with seven AMH staff members to streamline the process to enter the large back log of paper files into an existing electronic filing system. The process was clarified, resources were allocated, and progress was tracked.

- AMH staff used a team-based approach instead of a unit-based or siloed approach to complete the project.
- Management supported the system and the schedule to complete the project.
- Staff were granted “protected time” to complete their tasks.
- A standardized list of which paper files are “in” or “out” and how to section each file dramatically reduced variability and helped decrease the cycle time per paper file.
- The team created a process that allows for a more efficient way to scan, label, and file the paper files.
- An electronic filing system e-mail group was created for the team to get management and policy questions about the electronic file system answered quickly.

Benefit/outcome description

Since November 2008, the following benefits resulted from this event:

Cost:

1. One 8X8 cubicle holds an annual value of \$1006.08 in the Human Services Building.
Average 8X8 cubicle at \$1.31 per square foot lease price= \$83.84(12-months) = \$1,006.08
2. Fourteen file drawers previously used as storage for paper files are now available for those paper files that reside in boxes in the walkways. A two-drawer file cabinet costs AMH \$385.00¹ each. By sustaining an electronic filing system we have avoided a one time \$2,695 spend on file cabinets.



Benefits Package Documentation

\$385.00 per two-drawer file cabinet X 7 two-drawer file-cabinets = \$2,695.00

3. Over 200 binder notebooks previously used for paper files are now available for reuse. A binder notebook costs AMH on average \$4.00¹ each. By sustaining an electronic filing system, we have avoided a one time \$800 spend on binder notebooks.

\$4.00 per average binder notebook X 200 binder notebooks = \$800.00

4. By sustaining an electronic filing system, AMH avoids the annual future spend of \$413.28 to retain 56 boxes of records with the Oregon State's Record Center (\$7.38 per box per year²).

\$7.38 cost per retained box per year X 56 boxes = \$413.28

Annual cost for 56-boxes \$413.28 X average 5-years of retention = \$2,066.40

5. By avoiding the retention of paper records, AMH also avoids the cost of destroying those paper records. For example, each 25-pound box of retained records costs AMH about \$3.25¹ to destroy, or .13 per pound of paper. Fifty-six boxes would cost AMH \$182.00 to destroy.

\$3.25 X 56 boxes = \$182.00

6. The data storage of 1,200 paper files in the electronic file system's "I:drive" costs are nominal.

Service & Cycle Time:

- The cycle time to scan and file a paper file into the Electronic Filing System was reduced from taking up to four hours per file for the large complicated paper files to less than 45-minutes for those same paper files. This reduction of 195-minutes constitutes an 81% reduction.
- Over 1,200 paper files were scanned and filed in the electronic filing system before June 30, 2009.

People:

- One cubicle previously used as a storage holding space for hundreds of program paper files in binders is now freed-up and available for a staff member.
- Walkways and cubicles are less cluttered and safer for people.

Logic description

Completing this project was about employing Lean principals, standardizing a filing system, creating transparent and easy access to program information for the entire Division, streamlining the work spaces for staff, and simply completing a project that was started a year earlier.

There is logic in the space-saving opportunities for files and people and in reducing office supply demands; space in the Human Services Building, whether it is used for people or for things, costs DHS money. And although there is a cost to storing files electronically, the cost is less than the cost of retaining and destroying stored paper files using the State of Oregon's Record Center. Retrieving paper documents from the Record Center also costs DHS money and a minimum of a two week lag time.

¹ Invoices maintained by Diane L. Duncan, AMH

² Mark S. Graham, Property Specialist, Oregon State Records Center

The lessons learned about this type of event and what could have been tracked, include better baselines on spend on office supplies to maintain paper files, baselines on record retention, destroying, and retrieving costs, and baselines on how program staff access and use files.

Attachments:

- Data Spreadsheet
- Reinvestment Plan
- Business Case

References:

Surveys – customer/client:

Reports – internal/external:

Web links:

