Microsoft

Coordinating care for vulnerable populations

Empowering Cross-Agency Collaboration

This information is for government decision-makers who:

- Direct or manage care for vulnerable populations across many government agencies.
- Recognize the urgency to transform government processes to make it easier to work across agencies to enable better care for vulnerable populations but aren’t sure how to start.

Innovating for more effective government services

How can government organizations innovate for more effective services? Is it enough to digitize processes, or does transformation require a cultural shift as well?

The importance and impact of government agency work cannot be overstated. Its effects are felt by nearly every human on the planet. Collaboration between government agencies and departments is increasingly important, for example between caseworkers and child advocates or doctors and special assistant attorney generals. Technology has dissolved the boundaries between borders and between people. Government processes and interactions with the public need to keep pace with the increasing expectations of people.

Here we explore how cross-agency collaboration can help governments coordinate care for vulnerable populations, while addressing the challenges—and how to overcome them.

Coordinating care for vulnerable populations

Government support for vulnerable populations is uniquely challenging in that the people who fall into this category often need immediate care. Children being moved to foster care, adults with serious mental illness, elders being abused, people with disabilities suffering maltreatment—these are crisis scenarios that demand rapid response from government agencies. The consequences of late action and the cost to the individual, government, and society are high.

The COVID-19 pandemic could increase global poverty by as much as

half a billion people, or 8%

of the total human population.[1]

To establish appropriate responses, agencies should think about:

Optimizing visibility

Government workers need a means by which multi-disciplinary teams can coordinate care across systems: child welfare, healthcare, education, law enforcement, advocates, legal, courts, social services, and so on. Once this information sharing is in place, building a tracking system based around the individual rather than originating with an agency can optimize visibility throughout the entire system.

Variations in readiness

Different levels of readiness and capabilities across different government agencies makes it hard to implement digital transformation that can support cross-agency collaboration. Some agencies will be ready to embrace much more advanced steps than others, and progress can only happen at the pace of the slowest mover. Starting with small steps that bring everyone along together can be a wise way forward.

[1] United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals, undated.

Customer story

Oregon's foster care system consolidates data, improves process

The Contingent works to mobilize Oregonians to walk alongside children, youth, and families in support of the state of Oregon's foster care system. After struggling to collect and use data to further that mission, the organization developed a customer relationship management solution using Microsoft Dynamics 365, Power BI, and Azure – a seamless, secure system that's automatically compliant with state privacy regulations. Now the organization is using this solution to recruit supporters, improve the certification process for candidate foster families, and ultimately get foster children the care they need.

We made an all-in investment in technology. Our initiative has subsequently expanded 10-fold. It wasn't until we moved to Dynamics 365 that we were actually able to grow."

Ben Sand
CEO
The Contingent

Getting started

Caring for vulnerable populations is an imperative for governments around the world. Taking the first step toward digital transformation enables more powerful cross-agency collaboration, which can bring better outcomes for vulnerable people. The urgency to embrace digital transformation has never been greater, and governments can build on this to lay the foundation for a long-term strategic approach.

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View the "Legacy systems leave child advocacy workers grasping at straws to save children" infographic >

Transform collaboration within and across agencies with Microsoft Teams >

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