

Case Study

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Caregiver Record Management Application (CARMA)

The Challenge

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program for Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PFAFC) provides support for family caregivers of veterans from certain eras. As the VA expanded access to the Program, modernizing the IT systems utilized as part of the Caregiver Support Program became a priority. The VA needed a tool to expedite internal processes by automating manual work and integrating multiple systems.

The Solution

In collaboration with our partners, Acumen and the VA Caregiver Support System, our technical team developed the Caregiver Records Management Application (CARMA) for the PFAFC expansion. CARMA was developed as part of the Digital Transformation Center (DTC), which accelerates the VA's modernization efforts by using emerging technologies to better serve veterans and their families. Our team used a Platform as a Service (PaaS) solution for this challenge, taking advantage of the flexibility and technical capabilities of the Salesforce platform. Having led the DTC program for several years, our technologists, security experts, and program managers knew that building a Salesforce application was the quickest and most effective solution to meet the challenge. Throughout the project, the team addressed critical data integrity challenges created by the original CARMA data set, remediating data issues on a case-by-case basis to mitigate risk to end users.

The Benefits

CARMA delivers a variety of benefits to both the VA business office, as well as directly to veterans and their families. CARMA integrated multiple VA systems while automating manual tasks. It provides the ability to create electronic health record with the click of a button so that Caregiver Support Coordinators can document their clinical interactions more easily. The tool enables consistency by systematically adjusting stipend payment calculations and alerting VA users when annual reassessments of PFAFC participants are due. Additionally, it includes a digital application that allows individuals to apply for the Caregiver Support Program online. The end result is a quicker and more effective process that helps the VA expand the PFAFC to families of more veterans.

The Results

- By developing a PaaS solution that built upon existing VA platforms, our team helped the VA efficiently and cost-effectively meet legislative deadlines while enhancing support to caregivers by speeding up, consolidating, and simplifying VA processes.
- This modernization has served approximately 35,700 caregivers for the PCAFC program and 17,000 PGCSG caregivers since its implementation.
- Since its launch, CARMA has received 150,000 applications for individuals seeking to enroll in the Caregiver Support Program.
- On the January Payment, the Financial Management System successfully ingested the payment file with 32,973 accepts.