



case study administrative services

H Flexibility & Employee Satisfaction Highlight Benchmark Medical ASP Solution

Client:

Benchmark Medical Inc.

Industry:

Healthcare

Covered Employees:

1,500

Highlights:

One of the nation's leading providers in the musculoskeletal outpatient rehabilitation industry with more than 350 points of service in 19 states.

SHPS Solutions:

- Eligibility & Enrollment
- Administrative Service Provider

Client:

Benchmark Medical Inc., (Benchmark) is a four-year old company specializing in outpatient therapy, orthotics and prosthetics and industrial rehabilitation. In its short existence, Benchmark has grown primarily through the acquisition of best-in-class healthcare service providers within its core market segment. Since September, 2000, Benchmark has added more than 20 companies to its portfolio, all of whom exhibited market leadership and delivered high-quality patient care.

Benchmark utilized acquisitions as a major component of its growth strategy. Management chose to outsource its benefits administration applications, as it required minimal up-front investment and the leased system provided Benchmark the flexibility to pay on a per-employee-per-month basis as the business and employee population grew proportionally. However, their acquisition rate and the rapid integration of new employees into the Benchmark culture soon outgrew their initial benefits administration solution. It became clear that Benchmark needed eligibility & enrollment services that provided long-term value and flexibility, including features such as:

- Enhanced accuracy of eligibility payments to minimize overpayments;
- Customized and flexible enrollment features and options, including the ability to add services "a la carte" as benefits expansion dictated;
- The ability to efficiently handle multiple carrier feeds and create ad-hoc reports from the received data;
- Increased HR staff satisfaction with the enrollment process.

Using the above-mentioned features as a guide to finding a new benefits administrator, Benchmark initiated a RFP process which resulted in six finalists. SHPS was awarded the Administrative Service Provider (ASP) contract in August, 2004.



Objectives and Actions:

SHPS' online benefits administration solution is an intuitive, yet powerful, web-based application designed specifically for mid-market administrators that want the convenience of web access and the benefits and flexibility of a sophisticated administration system. Using SHPS' enrollment engine saved Benchmark the cost- and time-consuming process of developing its own complicated and expensive technology. It offers Benchmark several features that are critical to maintaining an employer- and employee-friendly benefits administration system, including:

- Automated plan set-up tools with custom web screen options;
- Date-of-hire enrollment capability;
- Complete business rule sets, pricing and credit calculations;
- Change tracking and effective date tracking for calculating retroactivity for billing purposes;
- Dynamic census system that recognizes changes in employee status and automatically makes adjustments;
- Continuous incoming data validation from employees and other data systems to ensure consistent, accurate information is used between all parties (i.e., carriers, payroll providers, employees, and employer).

While the eligibility & enrollment application provides a robust set of benefits for Benchmark's employees and human resources (HR) group, another key reason Benchmark chose SHPS was the training and support offered by SHPS to the Benchmark HR team. The SHPS implementation team trained and supported Benchmark HR employees on creating ad hoc reports and developing expertise in Access to get an accurate view of the employee landscape and supply meaningful, timely HR data for management. Acting as a partner with the Benchmark HR department, SHPS helped Benchmark to make the entire enrollment process easier and less painful.

Results:

Benchmark used the SHPS eligibility & enrollment solution for the first time during Fall open enrollment with a 1/1/05 effective date. Immediately, it reaped benefits when Benchmark identified some carrier invoice issues. The new platform provided accurate employee census data to help identify real costs that resulted in a billing reconciliation in Benchmark's favor.

From the employee perspective, Benchmark's previous years' online enrollment participation topped out at 45 percent. The 2004 Fall open enrollment via the SHPS platform yielded an 80 percent participation rate.

"The SHPS enrollment application is intuitive and our employees found it easy-to-use," said Andrew Smith, director of benefits and compensation for Benchmark Medical. "We almost doubled our online enrollment rate from last year and I have no doubts that the efficiency inherent in the application had an effect on the increased participation. Simply put, it was the smoothest open enrollment I've ever been involved with and it met our objectives. I give it an 'A'".

By leasing SHPS' eligibility & enrollment solution, Benchmark management no longer needs to worry about its benefits administration system lagging behind its corporate growth plans. From a human resources benefits perspective, Benchmark now enjoys the flexibility to add additional SHPS services, including FSA/HRA administration, COBRA services and direct bill, to name a few, and be confident their benefits administration platform will accommodate the additional functionality.

