



Aged care services provider ramps up technology with Epicor SLS to handle regulatory and industry change

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Adelaide, Australia
- ▶ Industry: Aged Care
- ▶ Website: www.eldercare.net.au

Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Dealing with industry change and increased regulatory requirements
- ▶ Insufficient client management, reporting and billing functionality
- ▶ Integration with clinical care, ledger and cash management systems
- ▶ Time-consuming, manual processes for funding reconciliations and accruals, as well as for data sharing between technology tools

Solution

- ▶ Epicor SLS

Benefits

- ▶ Automated processes resulting in reduced end-of-month reporting timeframe
- ▶ Increased system controls and improved data governance
- ▶ Integration with clinical care and other financial systems
- ▶ Access to more timely and accurate data
- ▶ Improved customer service and capabilities to respond to client inquiries



Eldercare was founded in 1979, and today is one of the largest and most experienced aged care providers in South Australia. Affiliated with the Uniting Church, Eldercare is a community service organisation and a not-for-profit charity that offers approximately 1,000 licensed aged care beds and more than 200 self-contained retirement units across South Australia.

Besides handling the financial, regulatory and compliance requirements of its business, Eldercare manages a dedicated team of 1,400 staff, 350 volunteers and more than 200 contractors across the organisation's 22 locations in Adelaide and on Yorke Peninsula.

Leveraging technology to keep up with legislative, financial and compliance requirements

Aged care in Australia, as an industry, is highly regulated and is undergoing a period of substantial change with increasingly complicated financial requirements.

Running a successful aged care services organisation like Eldercare requires a system to have the ability to adapt to varied funding structures, offer flexible financial reporting capabilities, meet the industry's extensive financial compliance and governance requirements and facilitate Medicare claims and rebates.

Aged care providers like Eldercare need a modern technology solution in place to help manage all of that effectively.

“We needed a new system with strong functionality around client management, client reporting and client billing and we wanted it to be ready to go and sufficient for our needs right out of the box, without requiring a lot of customisation,” said Scott Morgan, corporate services executive for Eldercare.

“We wanted to be able to manage the system ourselves after the implementation without requiring ongoing consulting and maintenance services from the vendor. It was important to us that the technology enabled us to implement and manage business process improvements and gave us the ability to write our own reports,” stated Morgan.

Eldercare sought a solution that would provide capabilities for immediate aged care legislative compliance and also offer a foundation for future changes.

The solution also needed to be fully integrated with Eldercare's chosen clinical care system as well as its financial applications for general ledger and cash management.

Choosing a locally developed and supported technology solution

Epicor SLS (Senior Living Solutions) is designed, developed and supported in Australia by local developers with local knowledge of legislation, regulations and the financial management requirements of Australian aged care organisations.

Eldercare was attracted to Epicor SLS because it is easy to use, especially in the areas of client billing and client management, and offers a fully integrated financial suite of products.

Overall, it is a more sophisticated solution than Eldercare's previous system; therefore it is better able to handle its multifaceted billing scenarios and compliance requirements.

The solution from Epicor, designed specifically for the aged care sector, gave Eldercare the capacity to effectively and efficiently meet all of its current legislative requirements and complete all the necessary compliance reports. It also integrates with other key systems.

“We found that the Epicor staff had strong project management and technical skills. Also, they knew our aged care sector really well, so that meant the project ran smoothly. The knowledge of the Epicor staff helped build a strong rapport with our staff,” said Morgan.

“Another important factor for us was that Epicor SLS catered to our requirements as a standard product,” said Morgan, “and it provided the tools and framework for Eldercare to internally implement and manage our own ongoing business process improvements and reporting requirements.”

A model customer and a successful rollout

Eldercare credits following the Epicor Signature implementation methodology with allowing its team to be flexible and still implement and deliver key milestones without adversely impacting its daily activities.

“The Epicor professional services team is proficient in project management,” said Morgan. “The Epicor SLS consultant assigned to us during implementation was thorough and well versed with the aged care legislation and at the same time had comprehensive technical and working knowledge of the technology solution.”

Epicor showed Eldercare the best way to deploy the technology solution to get maximum value from its investment and Eldercare got involved, learned how to use the system and approached it with an ownership mentality. Like all Epicor customers, Eldercare knows its business best and—with support—can apply that knowledge of its business needs and an understanding of the system to get the most value from the Epicor SLS solution. This is the approach Epicor recommends its customers take for best success, and Eldercare is an excellent example of best-practice implementation from the customer side of things.

“Eldercare was very committed to this project and we therefore invested in the necessary resources,” said Morgan. “That meant we could ultimately achieve the benefits we wanted and ensure that the project was a big success.”

Post implementation, Eldercare began using Epicor for all aspects of the funding and reconciliation for both its aged care and its retirement living businesses, including client management, billing, prudential reporting and more.

“With Epicor SLS, we can serve our customers better”

Morgan said that implementing the Epicor SLS solution has allowed Eldercare to standardise business functions. Employees have shared positive feedback describing the system as more intuitive and easier to use than their previous technology solution. As the IT team has used the Epicor SLS solution to centralise a number of key functions, it has increased system controls and improved data governance by using tools such as exception reporting.

Prior to implementing the Epicor SLS solution, Eldercare was not able to automate functions such as funding reconciliations and accruals. It was not able to integrate its financial application with its clinical care system. The billing team was not looking forward to the timeconsuming task of setting things up so that they could meet the requirements of the industry’s legislative reforms.

“We’ve been able to automate many of our end of month processes, including accruals and reconciliations, so we’ve gained many efficiencies out of that,” said Morgan. “We’ve also been able to integrate our clinical care system with Epicor SLS, to

feed data between both systems. As a result, we have shortened our end of month timeframes to deliver more accurate and timely financial reports.”

Eldercare saw specific time savings in terms of the preparation of Prudential Reporting requirements and the annual Aged Care Survey, thanks to Epicor SLS.

“We value the feedback of our staff and colleagues, and one of the subject matter experts within our billing team has commented a number of times that the implementation of all the changes as a result of legislative reforms over the last twelve months would have been much more difficult if we were still using our previous system and processes,” said Jane Pickering, chief executive for Eldercare.

“Essentially, and most importantly, we can serve our customers better,” said Pickering. “The Epicor SLS system gives us access to more timely and accurate data, which means that we can respond to client inquiries much faster than we used to.”

Eldercare now has the controls in place to reduce the chance of billing errors, enabling the organisation to be responsive and produce timely and accurate information for its clients.

“We would have no hesitation in recommending Epicor,” said Morgan.

About Epicor

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