



**OPEN HEARTS  
FAMILY WELLNESS  
BUILDS HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
AXIOMEHR SOFTWARE**

**AXiOMEHR**

**The 100 employees of  
Open Hearts Family  
Wellness very much  
live up to their  
organization's name.**

They're open, compassionate, and welcoming toward the thousands of Arizonans seeking the agency's community-based mental health, substance abuse, and housing support.

To ensure it could continue to deliver on its mission, Open Hearts recently decided it needed to tighten things up, especially around its aging electronic health record (EHR) system. Although it worked well enough when it was installed in 2005, the system couldn't adapt to changing times – and regulations. Unresponsive technical support made the experience worse.

## ***The challenge***

“Our biggest challenge has been obtaining support for any changes we needed to comply with regulations or execute on best practices,” said Shannon Nordahl, Director of Business Integrity for Open Hearts. “We had to build everything ourselves which, at times, took many hours from already busy schedules. And even then, we would have problems integrating the upgrades.”

For example, a few years ago, a regulator required Open Hearts to add a single industry-standard field on a billing claim form. The addition was injecting data into a single box on a claim form. Despite the simplicity of the ask, it took more than six months for Open Hearts' previous EHR provider to get that one box configured. The delay resulted in rejected claims and lost revenue.

It was a similar situation when Open Hearts was required to integrate electronic visit verification (EVV) into its records for fraud detection. This request, too, took months to address. “The process created many barriers for staff in the field and in the end, we thankfully did not have to use EVV for the services that we provided,” said Nordahl.

Another challenge: The legacy system stored patient data in free-form text fields, exactly the opposite of how a modern EHR should manage information – with as much structured data as possible. Structured health care data is typically shared in predefined formats, to ensure better interoperability that enhances efficiency and patient care.



## *Search for solution*

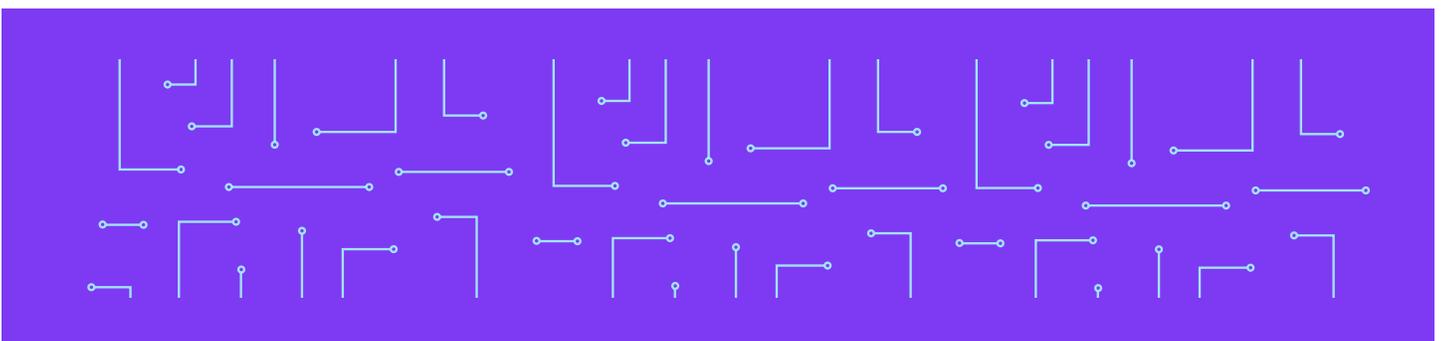
By 2023, Open Hearts had experienced enough. A task force set out to find a new and better EHR system to manage patient data, document treatment, and drive the revenue cycle, including payment through federal block grants and Medicaid funds.

The team interviewed three vendors and viewed their demos. The unanimous choice was AxiomEHR from Health Information Management Systems (HiMS).

Open Hearts found the AxiomEHR platform to offer several advantages over competitors. The HiMS team is local to Phoenix-based Open Hearts, and its people are hands-on and highly responsive from the start. The team also is highly informed on state standards and regulations related to community health.

After two decades with their legacy system, the Open Hearts team found the AxiomEHR system to be surprisingly user friendly. It intelligently automates workflows, particularly when it captures clinicians' notes and turns them into structured data that triggers follow up, treatment plans, claims, and prescription refills.

AxiomEHR also uses structured data fields to guide clinical care, which is particularly helpful for clinicians who practice Open Heart's signature Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics, a comprehensive approach for understanding and addressing the impact of trauma on child development.



## Better care

“The clinical documentation functionality in AxiomEHR has been especially valuable,” said Nordahl. “The structure is tailored to drive and support best therapeutic practices.”

For clinicians and the entire staff, there is less typing in AxiomEHR and, thus, less time spent on EHR record-keeping, an activity proven to correlate with health care burnout. Instead of free-form text fields, there are checkboxes, enabling staff to save time to focus on top priorities. Structured intake forms make it quicker and easier to onboard new patients. Their new charts are populated automatically.

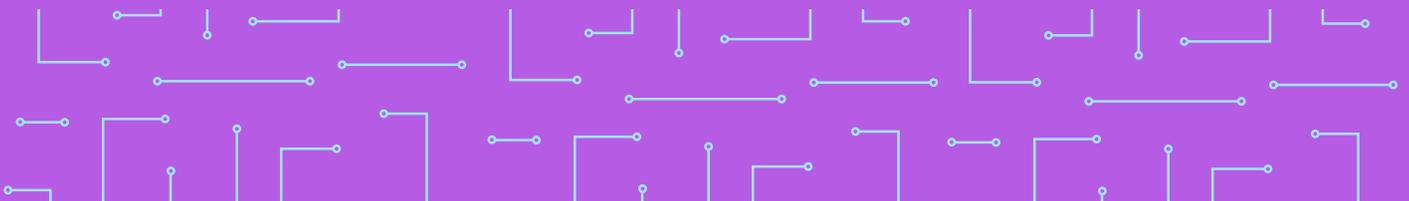
Patient and billing Information are easier than

ever to extract for analysis, and AxiomEHR’s revenue cycle management (RCM) technology coaches claims-processing personnel to optimize their coding for optimal revenue. In fact, the HiMS team’s RCM expertise was so evident that Open Hearts opted to outsource this process to HiMS.

“The RCM module is really great,” said Nordahl. “It shows us our highest possible billing codes and gives us a lot of data we can use to expedite claims and reduce disputes. Some companies lose money in their EHR changeover. We immediately saw better claims performance in the RCM function.”

*Perhaps most importantly, HiMS personnel are extremely responsive. Now when Open Hearts needs a change, it’s addressed right away.*

**“Before, when we asked for support, we were lucky to get a response the same month. Now it’s the same hour,” Nordahl said. “We’ll hop on Zoom and the AxiomEHR team gets it done.”**



# AXiOMEHR