CASE STUDY

City of Wilmington improves impact with Bonterra Case Management Enterprise
When Dr. Debra Mason began as Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI) coordinator for the City of Wilmington, Delaware—a position to which she was appointed by the city's mayor—she had no hesitation when selecting a case management solution. Debra had used Bonterra Program Management's Case Management Enterprise solution (formerly Social Solutions) successfully at her previous organization, so when she began her new role for the city in January 2023, she had no hesitations about making the move. Just seven days passed between Debra's call to Bonterra and her first day of implementation.

Debra had a proven track record of overseeing successful outcomes using Bonterra Case Management at her previous community agency, Wilmington HOPE Commission. With the aid of Bonterra Case Management, Debra established many fruitful relationships at the HOPE Commission with partners throughout the area. The HOPE Commission provided many social services to the community, from virtual GED services to regular health and wellness checks.

After seeing her success growing the HOPE Commission, Wilmington Mayor Mike Purzycki appointed Debra to lead a new progressive initiative as CPSI coordinator for the city. As CPSI coordinator, Debra is responsible for bringing together community organizations to improve safety through collaboration. What better way to elicit community-wide collaboration than with Bonterra's Case Management solution.

In a recent conversation with Debra, she shared more about the CPSI program and the role of Bonterra Case Management Enterprise. The story of Debra's work with CPSI in Delaware's largest city is both inspirational and practical. Read on for the full Q&A.
Tell us about the CPSI program and its goals.

Debra
The CPSI was formed to predict and pinpoint problems that often lead to crime and to determine ways to help prevent criminal activity. CPSI pulls together different organizations in the community that deal with the impending issues facing Wilmington neighborhoods. They interact with adults in the justice system, juveniles who are having issues in school, individuals living in low income neighborhoods stricken with violence, and much more.

The CPSI leads the vision, and the community organizations collaborate to drive the impact. All the while, Bonterra Case Management Enterprise brings them together to achieve a common objective and to improve the community from the ground up. The goal is to pull all of our resources together and address the problem as a group effort versus a siloed approach in order to figure out the most effective way to collaborate and solve problems together.

What did you like about your previous experience using Bonterra Case Management and why did you bring it with you to the City of Wilmington?

Debra
One of the things that I really love about Bonterra Case Management is that you can access it from anywhere, whether you’re on your phone, a tablet, or a laptop. You don’t have to be in your office on your desktop computer to access information that you need. This is helpful for our type of organization because our staff can easily input information into the system in real-time while they are in the field. I was a probation officer for 10 years and that line of work required me to go out in the field and collect data, but without a cloud based tool, I would have to go back to my office and spend time entering that information after the fact, which ate up a lot of time and reduced accuracy. It’s not like that with Bonterra Case Management. Our team can sit in front of a client, take down notes directly into Bonterra Case Management Enterprise while in the field, and be confident in the fact that the data is stored safely and accurately.

The process of inputting data and retrieving this information through Bonterra Case Management Enterprise is also extremely intuitive. This further helps reduce errors and gives time back to staff because they are spending less time doing administrative tasks and have more time to focus on the mission at hand.

I also love that it’s very easy to make Bonterra Case Management Enterprise your own on your own. Unlike other software where you have to depend on somebody else to develop custom programming, Bonterra lets us make the system work for us.

When they said I could bring over a case management software to use for the entire organization, I knew without a doubt, hands down, it was going to be Bonterra Case Management.”

-Dr. Debra Mason
Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI) Coordinator,
City of Wilmington
I can't say enough about this program. I promote this program to every organization across the board. If you are using any other data collecting web-based tool, switch to this one, because, once you get the hang of it, it's a piece of cake.”

-Dr. Debra Mason
Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI) Coordinator,
City of Wilmington

Bonterra
How will you use Bonterra Case Management Enterprise to further your mission at CPSI?

Debra
We will first be using Bonterra Case Management Enterprise to enable the community organizations we work with to collect demographic information from the people they serve.

We'll then use some of the data we’ve already collected to get a better understanding of areas in need. We're not asking our partner organizations to collect much more data than they already do, but rather, we want to add more context to the information we already have. We want to take qualitative data and make it more quantitative. This will help guide more informed decision making throughout the community and allow us to articulate our successes.

Additionally, we want to start collecting information on staff members, including how long they're interacting with members of the community, how much of their time they're spending on certain things, and what resources they need and use the most.

One great aspect of Bonterra Case Management Enterprise is that we can do all of this work in a very private and respectful way. Our client's personal information is kept private and protected.

This is important for us as we work to ensure we're serving people with integrity.

Bonterra
How will Bonterra Case Management Enterprise help you measure success?

Debra
The biggest way that we're going to measure success is by tracking crime in designated areas. We have succeeded when crime has decreased. We have a close relationship with the Wilmington Police Department, and we'll work with them to track crime rates, examining crime in all public safety criteria, from burglaries to homicides.

We want to become an integral part of the community, and so we want to find ways to stop crimes before they happen. We'll do this by indicating areas of need and then providing the right services to the right people at the right time.
Bonterra Case Management Enterprise made my job easier. It’s made my staff’s job easier. It’s an easy tool to use, and you can use it anywhere. It’s just a great program.”

-Dr. Debra Mason
Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI) Coordinator, City of Wilmington