BOOSTING COMMUNITY OUTREACH ONE FILE AT A TIME

When the Davidson Colored School burned down in the early 1930s, teacher Ada Jenkins rallied the community to raise funds for a new brick schoolhouse. After Mrs. Jenkins' death, the school was renamed the Ada Jenkins School and served as the educational center for Black students in Davidson until integration in 1966. Today, the Ada Jenkins Center honors her legacy of education and community by helping people in need throughout the northern Mecklenburg County towns of Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville, North Carolina. The Center works to help people reach economic stability through community outreach efforts like workforce development assistance, educational opportunities, and referrals for safer housing options.

Among the many services it provides to the local region, the Ada Jenkins Center at one point offered medical care to community members. But when COVID-19 hit and a nearby free clinic offered to accept the Center's patients, the Center discontinued that work.

CHALLENGE

Although the Ada Jenkins Center was no longer providing medical services to the community, it still had a large amount of private patient files stored onsite. Local doctors frequently reach out for medical record access to ensure continuity of care.

> " THIS MAMMOTH CHUNK OF SPACE WAS TAKEN UP BY THESE FILES, WHICH WE NEEDED TO ACCESS BUT NOT EVERY DAY. IT WAS THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM— YOU HAD TO WALK AROUND IT. "

**Karen Martin, Director of Development,
Ada Jenkins Center**

Each time a doctor, nurse, or patient called the Center to request a file, someone on the Ada Jenkins Center team needed to locate the file, copy it, and send it out. This created a bottleneck for the Center as the intermediary between patients and their medical files.

This also disrupted the everyday responsibilities of the Center and detracted from their work serving the community. So, the Center needed a more efficient way to quickly locate patient files and securely share them with minimal effort.

During a tour of the facility, Iron Mountain employee Megan Cassidy noticed five floor-to-ceiling filing cabinets and asked about them. Karen Martin, Director of Development at the Ada Jenkins Center, said, "Those are hundreds of paper files we need to keep, but we don't know what to do with them." She explained that when the free clinic offered to serve the Center's clients, patient records were locked in those cabinets mostly untouched— in the middle of the main hallway.

SOLUTION

"Have you ever thought of digitizing all these files and eliminating these large cabinets altogether?" asked Megan. "That's what Iron Mountain does."

Because Karen and her team were busy managing the day-to-day needs of the Center, Megan wanted to help. She decided to reach out to two Iron Mountain VPs—Dale Lawing, the Senior Vice President and General Manager of US Operations, and Ray Dunne, Vice President of Digital, BPO & Mortgage Solutions, Field Operations— to see if there was a way Iron Mountain could give back to the Ada Jenkins Center team. Dale and Ray then connected the Center with Jim Bruhn, Imaging Production Supervisor at Iron Mountain, and the digital transformation of these patient files officially began.

> **" I WANTED TO SUPPORT THE ADA JENKINS CENTER. I'VE KNOWN THEM FOR YEARS AND YEARS.... THEY'RE VERY WELL KNOWN IN TERMS OF ALL THE ASSISTANCE THEY PROVIDE TO THE COMMUNITY."**

Dale Lawing, Senior Vice President and General Manager of US Operations, Iron Mountain

A team of Ada Jenkins Center staff and volunteers banded together to help box up the files, and Iron Mountain sent trucks to pick up the 35 tightly packed boxes. With each box holding about 3,500 pieces of paper, at least 122,500 items were sent to the local Iron Mountain facility for scanning.

Each medical record was run through Iron Mountain's preparation and execution process, which includes:

1. Document preparation

2. Document scanning

3. Quality assurance

4. Indexing and verification

5. Digital storage

Throughout this process, there were a few instances when the Ada Jenkins Center needed quick access to a patient file. When this happened, Jim's team scanned the document or image, put it into PDF form, zipped it, and sent it through an encrypted email that same day.

Jim's team was extremely thorough throughout the process. "I always tell my team, 'When looking at documents, if you wouldn't accept it as a customer, we're not going to output it. We all image. We all check for quality. We all verify. And we stand together on that,'" he says.

BENEFITS

After all the Center's patient files were scanned and indexed, Iron Mountain returned them on an encrypted USB drive. All the work to digitize these files resulted in:

> Freed-up work space for new nonprofit partners who are sharing the building and providing more collaboration for client services

> Renewed focus on direct service delivery with less time and resources spent locating folders, photocopying files, and arranging appointments for client pickup

> Improved access to and secure sharing of patient records via email

> Enhanced protection and confidentiality of private information

> Fewer healthcare barriers for patients

> **" WHAT'S GREAT IS THAT WE DON'T HAVE TO PHOTOCOPY ALL OF THESE FILES FOR SOMEONE. WE CAN DROP IT TO THE MEDICAL PROVIDER ELECTRONICALLY.... IT'S MADE IT SUCH A SMOOTH PATIENT PROCESS."**

Karen Martin, Director of Development, Ada Jenkins Center

Serving the community in every way possible is what the Ada Jenkins Center does best. By removing these infrequently used medical files, scanning each piece, and storing them digitally, Karen and her team can stay focused on their mission and the people they serve every day.

Find out more about the Ada Jenkins Center on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Learn more about our scanning and digital storage services.

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