

FacTrac, a new Facilities Tracking App

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SUMMARY

In 2017, a facility tracking database (FTD) was created in Microsoft® Access and hosted on the New Jersey Department of Health network. New Jersey State Cancer Registry (NJSCR) staff were asked to centralize and modernize the FTD. The FTD was developed to keep hospital and non-hospital administrative data in a central location. The data include facility name, address, phone numbers, contact information, file submissions (file name, file type, date, first year of contact count, and diagnosis count), vital status follow-up requests, and communication notes.

CHALLENGE

Access databases are not ideal for a multi-user environment. They also pose security issues such as inconsistent connectivity, limited features, and limited ability to add more complex features. The legacy FTD was outdated and made it challenging for the team to share information across the registry, and its instability increased the risk of data corruption.

SOLUTION

NJSCR information technology staff decided to convert the Access database to a web-based application to improve accessibility, security, and usability. The new tool would also help the registry implement more streamlined, consistent, and reliable processes for the team's day-to-day operations. The new facilities tracking application was named FacTrac.

FEATURES AND TASKS

FacTrac allowed the registry staff to retrieve and update important facility information seamlessly and quickly. We also implemented graphics describing file submissions providing information on case counts by year and category (first year of contact and diagnosis year), role-based security to prevent staff from entering certain areas of the application and validating updates. Other features include:

1. Role-based user access controls.
2. Built-in reports that provide quick access to information based on a category.
3. Real-time file tracking and daily case count manual entry.
4. Facility address and identifier information that registry staff can edit.
5. Facility point of contact information.

6. Comments to note any communication with the facility or issues with submitted files. Registry staff can only modify comments they created.
7. Enhanced interoperability; as facility caseload information occurs in real time as files are uploaded to the registry database, SEER*DMS.
8. Registry staff enter dates and notes about the facility vital status follow-up reports.
9. Ability to add a new facility.
10. Ability to manage users, assign staff to facilities, make facilities active or inactive, enter a new registry representative, and keep track of facility representatives' status.

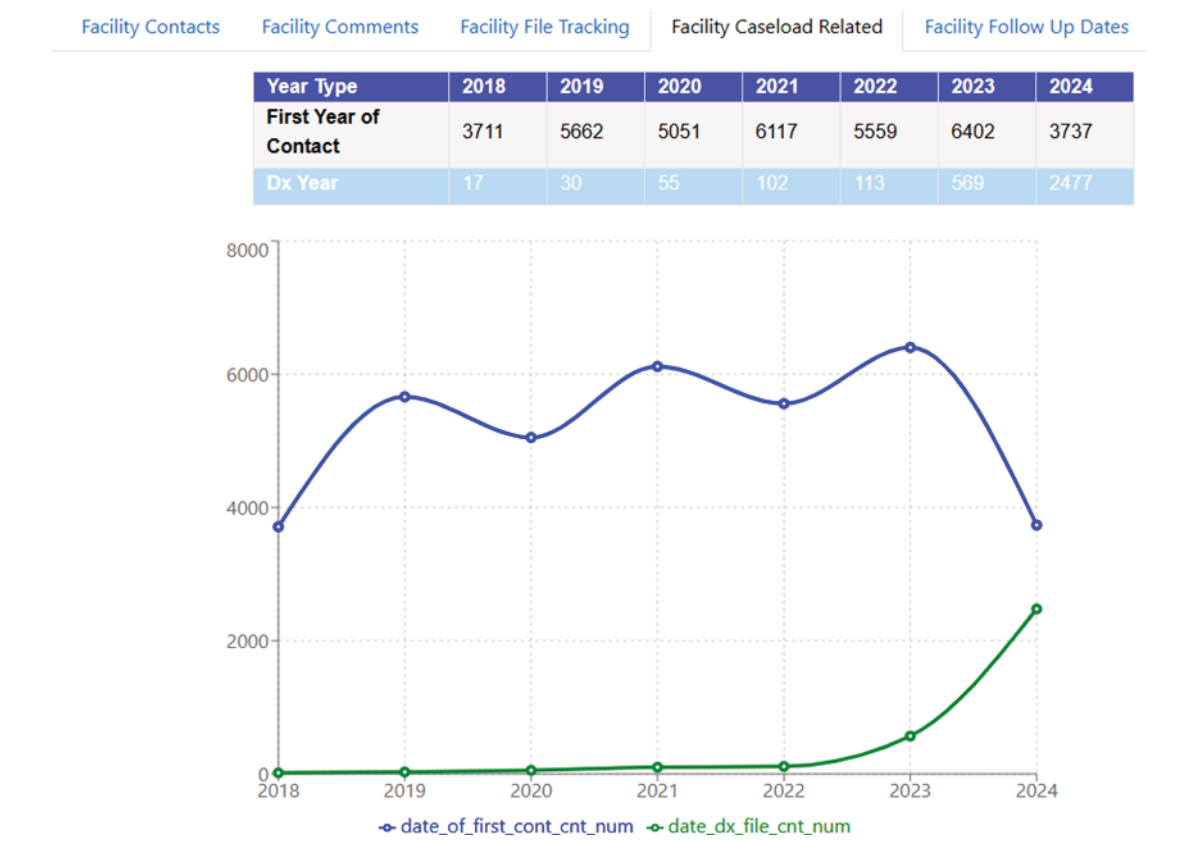
RESULTS

The development life cycle for FacTrac was 13 months from initial business requirement meetings to deployment. The team consisted of a database architect, web developer, and a registry subject matter expert.

A focus group tested FacTrac for accessibility, ease of use, and input and retrieval of information. Initial reactions from registry staff were positive. The team learned the registry staff wanted quick access, fewer mouse clicks to retrieve data, and access to the application from home and in the office.

The team wrote a users' guide that included detailed instructions with screenshots, how to report issues, and who to contact for enhancements. Future plans include out of state tracking, enhancing the file insert process, and improving the pathology tracking.

The following graphic is from the In-State Facility Tracker screen. It displays facility caseload over the years.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

FacTrac provides the staff with accessibility when reviewing facilities. The system provides the flexibility to make enhancements and interact with other systems to support day-to-day operations. This is a multi-phase project with phase 1 completed. Additional phases include tracking records sent to the NJSCR from out-of-state participants, death certificate extraction, and pathology record keeping.