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SharpVisions Selects TOTAL: Quality and TOTAL: Record™ Solutions from Esteam

New Initiative Focuses on Continuous Organizational Improvement

PITTSBURGH, PA, October 10, 2006 – Esteam, LLC, a leading provider of comprehensive software solutions for human services agencies, today announced that SharpVisions, Inc., a Pennsylvania organization dedicated to customizing supports for persons with challenging disabilities, selected Esteam software and services for enhancing administrative processes and supporting continuous improvement efforts.

SharpVisions chose TOTAL: Record™, a software application that helps human services providers dramatically improve clinical and reimbursement processes, and TOTAL: Quality, a Web-based organizational assessment tool that enables program and department alignment and visibility of management performance to support a quality-driven organization. The choice of Esteam was prompted by the need for a better system to capture data for billing and to support planning and quality initiatives.

“In a business where we’re continually asked to do more, and do it better and faster without the accompanying funding increases to pay for that improvement, we have to become more efficient,” said Lynn Hoffman-Kyle, chief financial officer of SharpVisions. “Esteam will give us the ability to capture more complete information at the point of service and use it not only for billing, but also for identifying trends and other information that support planning and quality efforts.”

As Pennsylvania continues to move to a fee-for-service environment, MR providers face new challenges. Funding agencies and regulatory bodies are increasing service tracking and reporting requirements, and are imposing standardized, automated processes for billing and reimbursement. Faced with increasing compliance costs, risk of lost revenue and greater scrutiny of the services provided to each client, providers like SharpVisions seek solutions that help them increase productivity and enhance the quality of services delivered.

“The combination of TOTAL: Quality and TOTAL: Record gives SharpVisions a system for improving the ways we gather information, and for using that information throughout our organization to better manage our internal processes and improve our services,” said Ruth Siegfried, chief executive officer of SharpVisions.

SharpVisions, which serves clients in 23 Pennsylvania counties, creates customized services, along with a unique billing code and reimbursement rate, for every individual. Tracking service provision and accompanying information is a key to accurate invoicing and timely reimbursement under the current patchwork of state, county and local billing structures.

As a part of a state-wide initiative to ensure that Medicaid funds are being spent appropriately, a new electronic claims processing and management system is now being piloted throughout Pennsylvania. The Provider Reimbursement and Operations Management Information System (PROMISe) is changing Medicaid service reimbursements and how they are billed. When fully implemented, PROMISe will provide a single, uniform system—and a detailed set of service codes—for managing an individual service recipient’s information and electronic claims processing.

TOTAL: Record provides a single repository for clinical and financial information that eliminates repetitive data entry, along with the potential for human error for Esteam customers. The result is more accurate and efficient electronic invoicing that meets each payor’s specific requirements—and a more seamless transition to PROMISe billing as it rolls out across the state.

“We design a unique program of services based on the needs of each person we serve,” Siegfried said. “We anticipate that TOTAL: Record and TOTAL: Quality will enable us to easily configure our clinical, financial and process improvement software around that individual program.”

“We constantly look for ways to improve the productivity of our staff,” said Hoffman-Kyle. “Esteam’s solutions will allow us to securely exchange and share specific information with the appropriate staff via remote access, enable staff to enter information at the point of service, and touch the data just once during initial entry. These types of efficiencies are critical to our efforts and help us achieve our mission by enabling us to spend less time on paperwork and devote more effort and resources to providing services to our clients.”

Prior to acquiring TOTAL: Record and TOTAL: Quality, SharpVisions relied heavily on traditional spreadsheets to track service units delivered and for analyzing service data and trends.

“Changes in billing requirements from agencies like the Department of Welfare created new demands for capturing and documenting the appropriate billing information,” Hoffman-Kyle said.

“In addition, looking at trends for a particular service we provide was very difficult. For example, if we believe there’s a demand for a particular service but we’re providing less than in the past, we need to know if it’s a staffing issue or if it’s a quality issue. Similarly, we need to be able to increase or decrease staffing based on our projections for a given service.”

“One of the key drivers behind the decision to purchase both solutions is the integration of TOTAL: Record with TOTAL: Quality, which allow us to direct additional focus to our internal improvement efforts,” Siegfried said. “The ability to utilize the repository data in a variety of ways provides us with quality management tools that will help us improve our existing services and support our ability to introduce new programs and services.”

This flexibility was a key factor that influenced SharpVisions’ selection of Esteam after evaluating several vendors. “Only TOTAL: Quality and TOTAL: Record were tailored to our MR-based program needs,” said Siegfried. “Tools offered by other vendors focused solely on the mental health market, and included too many components that we couldn’t or wouldn’t ever use. TOTAL: Quality and TOTAL: Record are remarkably similar to what we would have designed for our own use. And both can be configured in a variety of ways that are extremely useful to SharpVisions.”

“When we saw TOTAL: Record and TOTAL: Quality demonstrated, we knew they were products that would work for us,” added Hoffman-Kyle.

“The rapidly changing landscape of today’s highly competitive human services marketplace requires providers to seek new ways to increase the quality of service and create a culture of continuous improvement,” said George Pashel, president of Esteam. “By helping our customers improve operational efficiency and productivity, leading providers like SharpVisions are able to concentrate greater effort and resources on improving quality at every level. We look forward to helping SharpVisions achieve their mission of providing the highest quality services to their clients.”

About SharpVisions

SharpVisions, Inc., founded in the Pittsburgh area in 1992, is a non-profit organization providing customized support for people with challenging disabilities in a 23-county area. For more information, contact SharpVisions at 412-456-2144 or visit www.sharpvisions.org.

About Esteam

Esteam is a leading provider of software, services and expertise focused on improving the quality of human services. Esteam solutions address a significant shortcoming in the human services market. Organizations don’t have the resources, time or money to support the increasingly complex regulatory reporting and documentation requirements. Designed to be used throughout the organization, Esteam offers **Total: Impact**, the most comprehensive suite of software, strategic consulting services and deployment expertise for significantly improving the performance of human services organizations. Esteam provides mission critical solutions for leading human services organizations such as Pressley Ridge, The Barbor Institute and Keystone Human Services. For more information please contact us at info@esteam.net or by telephone at (412) 322-0629 or www.esteam.net.

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