



# BryField Group Case Study



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**Client** *Maternal and Child Health Consortium* of Chester County, PA ([www.ccmchc.org](http://www.ccmchc.org)) is committed to improving maternal and child health county-wide. Through the collaborative efforts of individuals, providers, and policy makers, MCHC ensures a healthy beginning for all children by working to reduce barriers to care and the factors contributing to low birth weight and infant mortality.

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**Scope** MCHC Executive Director (Pamela G. Bryer, MPH, CFRE) contacted The BryField Group to assist with planning relative to their foundational *Healthy Start* database. The engagement's goal was to identify the best, most expedient, most cost-effective course of action to remediate major system shortcomings: remote access; redundant data entry; *ad hoc* reporting; and future program support.

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**Background** Prior to this engagement MCHC was lead to believe that their existing database system was not able to support the anticipated growth or the remote access necessary to move from paper-based data collection and transmittal to the headquarters. It was suggested that the system be retired and replaced. From outside of MCHC, several 3<sup>rd</sup> party Customer Relationship Management (CRM) packages had also been suggested as alternatives to the system in place. Considerable resource was expended in the run up to this engagement in an effort to develop a replacement system but work on the initiative slowed when the cost was greater than anticipated. Efforts were further slowed by the absence of dedicated Information Technology and business analysis staff at MCHC.

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**Engagement** The BryField Group was engaged to move the project forward. Initial efforts focused on analysis and documentation of the involved business processes and data flow and analysis of the identified *Build* and *Buy* options. Due to cost and time considerations, *building* a new proprietary system was deemed unrealistic. In addition, the system under consideration was unable to easily be integrated with the PocketPC, a key data collection tool for case workers. Similarly, the *Buy* option was dismissed as not meeting enough of the requirements without significant customization. Clearly, other options were needed. To cast a wider net, The BryField Group suggested that a survey of similar organizations be undertaken to identify other options.

On the *Buy* side, BryField's survey identified one case management database package above all others that received favorable comments from organizations similar to MCHC. In addition, a promising *Enhance* option emerged when early phases of the stalled development effort were reviewed. Analysis showed that the existing database was not near end-of-life and could meet future MCHC needs. BryField suggested that required remote access could best be solved through a Virtual Private Network (VPN). Enhancement of the existing system could provide much of the missing functionality while limiting organizational disruption. Front end screens could be developed to give end users a tool to independently run the most frequently requested *ad hoc* reports.

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**Outcome** The decision was made to enhance the existing system. This represented both a tactical and a strategic win for MCHC. This solution could be developed and implemented within 3 months, as opposed to 6-18 months for other options, and at a cost of 20-30% of other options. Additional benefits: training would be considerably less impactful, given staff familiarity with the existing system. Use of a system maintained in-house positioned MCHC to be able to meet emerging needs associated with new programs, which would have been a strategic weakness had the decision been made to implement a 3<sup>rd</sup> party package.

Executive Director, Pamela G. Bryer, had this to say: "Like other nonprofits, Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County (MCHC) is challenged to collect, report, and evaluate program data based on various funders' requirements. The BryField group helped MCHC develop a strategy to evaluate and implement a cost-effective option to enhance our current data management capacity to better meet internal management and external reporting needs".