

CUSTOMER SUCCESS



## Sage MAS 500—Just What the Doctor Ordered

Nearly two centuries ago, Catherine McAuley devoted her life to ministering to Dublin’s poor, sick, and uneducated. When she inherited a vast fortune, she built a “House of Mercy” to shelter abandoned and abused women and children.

Her work continues today through the Sisters of Mercy Health System of St. Louis, which operates 17 acute care hospitals, a heart hospital, a psychiatric hospital, outpatient care facilities, physician practices, skilled nursing, and long-term residential care facilities in seven states, as well as community service projects and education programs on health-related topics. Mercy hospitals and medical centers are recognized for their commitment to meeting the needs of the communities they serve, regardless of patients’ ability to pay.

Mercy Health Plans (MHP) was created in 1994 as part of the Sisters of Mercy Health System. MHP is a managed care organization offering integrated healthcare throughout metropolitan St. Louis, Central and Southwestern Missouri, and Laredo, Texas. The goal of MHP is to establish a team approach, where all players have a vested interest in both controlling costs and ensuring positive outcomes.

### Ailing System

Until recently, the MHP accounting package was seriously ill. Balance sheets wouldn’t balance. Transactions didn’t add up on the general ledger report. System crashes were frequent. There was no audit trail for consolidated reports, since data had to be entered by hand into a series of spreadsheets.

“The lack of reliability was very frustrating,” explains Bob Zweibel, MHP’s controller. “We needed a solution that was 100 percent dependable, with greater functionality plus a complete range of intercompany capabilities.” Sage MAS 500 was the perfect prescription for what ailed MHP.

### Robust System Health

Sage MAS 500 is now the foundation for all of Mercy Health Plans’ financial operations, and accounting functions are healthy again. Not only does Sage MAS 500 perform all general ledger and payable functions, but it can receive data from MHP’s administrative system, a vertical product designed for the health insurance industry.

#### Customer:

**Mercy Health Plans**

#### Industry:

Healthcare insurance

#### Location:

St. Louis, Missouri

#### Number of Locations

Three

#### Number of Employees

370

#### System:

##### Sage MAS 500

- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Advanced Allocations
- eExecutive
- FAS Asset Accounting
- Purchase Order

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### CHALLENGE

To replace an unreliable, labor intensive accounting package with an integrated and automated financial system that offers substantial analysis and reporting capabilities.

### SOLUTION

Sage MAS 500 ERP financial modules.

### RESULTS

Ten-fold increase in functionality and reliability; streamlined automation of manual processes; elimination of redundant data input; a clear and accurate audit trail; enhanced financial analysis and reporting.

"We've experienced immediate benefits from Sage MAS 500 in processing intercompany transactions," says Steve Jansen, director of accounting. "Before, our staff accountant would spend approximately two days each month performing manual entries and adjustments between groups. Now each intercompany entry is made only once, reducing our total time spent on such entries to about half a day each month."

Another major improvement has been in reporting capabilities. "Our former system's report writer had very limited capabilities," Jansen says. "As a result, we did reports on spreadsheets. Now everything is integrated through Sage MAS 500. Reports, like monthly and year-to-date income statements and budget variances, are produced quickly and easily. Best of all, we know the numbers in the reports are right!"

A clear audit trail lets MHP have confidence in its numbers. "Before, consolidations were done on a spreadsheet, we never saw the entries," says Zweibel. "Any questionable entry had to be researched by hand. Now that Sage MAS 500 handles consolidations, we have a clear audit trail on each and every item."

Previously, checks were printed on pre-printed stock and signed by a machine. Today Sage MAS 500 produces checks from a laser printer using blank check stock. "We really appreciate the security and convenience of not having pre-printed check stock laying around, and not having to use the signature machine," Jansen notes.

Zweibel says the IS team has been pleased with Sage MAS 500 because it requires little or no maintenance. "Other than installation and interface set-ups, we've never had to call in our IS folks to fix anything on Sage MAS 500," he says.

Zweibel is confident that Sage MAS 500 will serve Mercy Health Plans well as it grows and improves. "We're getting a new administrative system soon, and having Sage MAS 500 in place now means that we're well-prepared," he comments. "And after six months we've only begun to utilize all the new features. Sage MAS 500 was definitely the right move, giving us the reliability and functionality we need now, plus the ability to embrace changes as they occur in the future."

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