



iTether Delivers Substance Abuse Treatment Innovation with Progress Health Cloud

CASE STUDY

Challenge

CLIENT

iTether

INDUSTRY
Healthcare

PRODUCTS
Progress Health Cloud

SUMMARY

With Progress Health Cloud, iTether was able to develop a new patient-centric experience that vastly improved substance abuse treatment through the convenience of a mobile application.

Substance abuse is a major epidemic in the United States, with recent statistics from the Center for Disease Control reporting that drug-related overdose deaths have more than doubled over the past 15 years. Meanwhile, the toll substance abuse is taking on the economy is just as staggering. According to the Surgeon General, the yearly annual economic impact in terms of crime, healthcare and lost productivity from the misuse and abuse of alcohol, illicit drugs and prescription medication is \$442 billion.

Sean Gunderson, co-founder of iTether, believes the first step in the fight against substance abuse starts by transforming the way treatment is delivered to patients struggling with addiction.

“The way it’s been done the last 40 years is through a paper-based system,” Gunderson explained. “You come into a program and get a booklet with a program you’re going to follow. Whether you’re a 19-year-old heroin addict or a 55-year-old alcoholic, you’re going down the same path. If that’s all you do, a 30-day in-patient clinical program, there’s a 90% chance of relapse within one year.”

Gunderson envisioned a platform that could modernize substance abuse treatment by giving providers a means to deliver long-term care to patients through an engaging mobile application. This led to the conception of iTether, a mobile platform that enables care providers to create personalized curriculums with built-in data analytics that facilitate ongoing treatment, even after patients have left the clinic.



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Sean Gunderson,
Co-Founder, iTether

Solution

To bring this life-changing platform to market quickly, iTether chose Progress Health Cloud to build the foundation of the application. With Progress, iTether got a fully-featured serverless digital application development platform that enabled the company to accelerate the development and delivery of its application.

“Getting to market quickly was a necessity for us and Progress helped us go from design to the general release of an enterprise application in less than five months,” Gunderson said. “Most mobile healthcare applications are for treatment of chronic conditions like diabetes. No one in the substance abuse treatment recovery space is delivering data-driven mobile treatment plans, so getting the product into experts’ hands meant we were collecting patient feedback earlier and iterating faster.”

The iTether mobile app puts digital treatment plans in the palms of patients’ hands and is instantly accessible wherever they are. This enables iTether to improve industry standards by offering a solution that transforms the delivery of treatment services and integrates services across the continuum of care.

For Providers:

- iTether is a patient engagement platform that provides real-time patient feedback, which improves outcomes.
- Providers can give their patients a dynamic treatment plan via a smartphone app, backed by a provider portal with data-driven analytics, to deliver patient-centered care.

For Payers:

- iTether gives payers greater provider accountability through evidence-based outcomes and other built-in reporting mechanisms.
- The application collects patient data via context-aware interventions that enable individualized, value-based care.

For Patients:

- iTether integrates the provider’s current treatment plan into an innovative mobile application that enables patients to fully immerse themselves in their treatment plan.
- iTether provides therapists and patients with in-app messaging, push-notifications for scheduled goals and events, and access to their assignments on-the-go, enabling patients to work on their recovery virtually anytime, anywhere. iTether extends care beyond the clinic.

One of the key advantages of Progress Health Cloud is the fact that it is a HIPAA-compliant app cloud. If Progress hadn't done the hard work of gaining HIPAA compliance, it would have been up to iTether to do so and to maintain compliance—and that can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars as well as precious development time. By providing a HIPAA-compliant platform for healthcare facilities (which is especially crucial in behavioral health), Progress Health Cloud saved iTether hundreds of hours of development time and the associated costs.



“With the iTether Patient Engagement Platform powered by Progress Health Cloud, our customers are able to extend their treatment, which delivers better results and ensures patients can stay actively engaged in their recovery process.”

Sean Gunderson,
Co-Founder, iTether

Results

Developing a similar enterprise patient engagement platform from the ground up could have taken anywhere from 12 to 18 months, doing it with Progress took a fraction of the time. With both the patient-facing and provider portal apps sharing the same backend, there was less code to write, test and maintain. The iTether team was able to stand up the backend in just one week and had a minimal viable app and clinical portal in beta in just over four months.

Because Progress Health Cloud is so easy to use, the iTether team can spin up new customers and clients very quickly and got multiple pilots running within months. Additionally, new features and functionality

can be added relatively easily, which enables the iTether application to be customized to the specific needs of each customer. One plug-in that iTether has already integrated is SurveyGizmo, which enables providers to send out interactive surveys and assessments, but Gunderson also sees other potential integration opportunities that will enable iTether to further enhance the application.

The response to iTether has been astounding, with users of all types reaping the benefits:

- Many of the patients using iTether have responded positively to the mobile application, with clinics noting significantly better engagement and communication from patients.
- Payers have benefitted from the built-in reporting mechanisms, which improve accountability through evidence-based outcomes.
- Case managers say that iTether has simplified their job—it's easy to keep track of patients when they are in touch daily outside of the clinic.
- Physicians are able to deliver highly personalized content for a dynamic treatment plan that speaks to the individual needs of each patient. Plus, the data is helping drive program improvement.

A study at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis has shown that over 75% of patients believe that the iTether app gives them more information and more motivation to make decisions regarding their health and recovery. Additionally, 85% of patients surveyed agreed that they would use iTether in the future if they needed to make decisions about their recovery.

“The biggest challenge for substance abuse treatment traditionally has been trying to figure out

how to keep patients from relapsing after leaving the security of an inpatient program,” Gunderson added. “With the iTether Patient Engagement Platform powered by Progress Health Cloud, our customers are able to extend treatment past the typical 30- to 90-day program to 12 to 24 months, which delivers better results and ensures patients can stay actively engaged in their recovery process.”

iTether

iTether, LLC was established to develop applications for use in behavioral change services in the healthcare industry. With an initial focus in the substance abuse treatment sector, our products are customizable and integrated across all levels of treatment services – patients, providers, and payors. We incorporate context aware interventions, track data analytics and deliver evidence based outcomes which lead to value based treatments and performance based payments, and we provide outstanding customer support. It is our goal to raise the standards in behavior modification services by engaging patients, delivering accountability, and improving long-term success rates.

Visit Website

www.itetherllc.com

Progress Health Cloud

Progress Health Cloud is the leading HIPAA-compliant solution for quickly building and delivering patient-centric and connected-care digital experiences across all healthcare segments. Accelerate application time to market, reduce total cost of ownership and speed up EHR and system integration time while maintaining strict HIPAA compliance with our purpose-built application development platform.

Learn More



[Progress Health Cloud](#)



[Business Value of Progress Health Cloud Whitepaper](#)

About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) offers the leading platform for developing and deploying mission-critical business applications. Progress empowers enterprises and ISVs to build and deliver cognitive-first applications that harness big data to derive business insights and competitive advantage. Progress offers leading technologies for easily building powerful user interfaces across any type of device, a reliable, scalable and secure backend platform to deploy modern applications, leading data connectivity to all sources and award-winning predictive analytics that brings the power of machine learning to any organization. Over 1,700 independent software vendors, 100,000 enterprise customers and 2 million developers rely on Progress to power their applications. Learn about Progress at www.progress.com or +1-800-477-6473.

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