

HUMAN SERVICES TODAY

National Organization for Human Services

VOLUME 04 | ISSUE NO. 4 | DECEMBER 2023



NATURAL LANGUAGE PROCESSING (NLP) TOOL PROVIDES CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS WITH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHILDREN THEY CARE FOR

ILLINOIS DCFS AND WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA CHOSE AUGINTEL TO MAXIMIZE QUALITY OF CARE DELIVERED



Augintel is a child welfare and social services-focused software development company focused on solving longstanding problems with data – specifically, narrative unstructured data. Augintel has pioneered the development of natural language processing (NLP) in child welfare and social services organizations to make narrative data accessible, searchable and actionable for staff across the organization – from front line clinicians to supervisors, quality managers and leaders.

Here are two examples of two recent initiatives: Earlier this summer, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

(IL DCFS) partnered with Augintel to provide child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and private agency provider staff with higher access and understanding of narrative data to gain insights needed to make informed decisions throughout the life of a case.

The agency has found that the tool has already enabled staff to realize a reduction in administrative burden by an estimated 20%. Augintel's NLP software pulls out key insights in real time, allowing caseworkers to quickly understand key risks, strengths and social determinants of health (SDOH), providing them with more time for direct interaction with children and their families. Augintel is

also being used to identify early warning signs, caseworker safety issues, fidelity to child welfare practice models and important statewide trends across cases. "Saving time and using technology to solve problems that directly benefits our families and staff is the ultimate win; as our caseworkers are now spending less time searching through paperwork for information and more time doing what they love doing – helping children and families," said Illinois DCFS Director Marc D. Smith. "Managers are also using Augintel to examine trends across caseloads, enabling them to be more efficient and proactive when examining big-picture issues affecting the families we serve." Additional use cases of Augintel include gathering key information for court reports, preparing for supervision meetings, tracking case progress and monitoring engagement.

In September this year, Augintel announced that Washington County, Pennsylvania had chosen its NLP platform to help child welfare caseworkers uncover critical information buried within narrative data such as case notes.

Prior to partnering with Augintel, caseworkers at Washington County would log into their legacy case management system, the Child Accounting and Profile System (CAPS), and spend an overwhelming amount of time clicking on each individual note one-by-one to find certain

information or come up to speed on a case. This made it incredibly challenging for caseworkers to access critical information such as family members, medications, previous services, or to understand case history and all the factors impacting the family's ability to thrive.

The Augintel platform will enhance caseworker practice at Washington County by quickly identifying service needs of families and reducing administrative burden on casework staff, who are facing larger caseloads due to staff turnover. Augintel will enable caseworkers to quickly understand a family's case history and whether a natural support system is already available within a family. Initial use cases will include understanding long standing risk factors, supporting



family finding efforts, and presenting safety threats such as weapons not being properly stored in the home. Augintel will also support child welfare leadership by allowing for real time quality assurance.



“We are so excited to provide our staff with this tool that will save notable time, particularly as our staff are stretched thin juggling multiple roles at once,” said Anne Schlegel, Director of Washington County Children & Youth Services. “It was such an easy decision for us to make. The time it took us from discovering the tool to implementation was minimal, and the integration with CAPS was simple. We hope to be on the forefront of helping bring this tool to other counties throughout the state, so they too can more easily access information that is deeply embedded across thousands of pages of case notes.”

“We look forward to helping caseworkers and supervisors at Washington County use our NLP technology to address these longstanding problems related to documentation and case notes,” said

Marty Elisco, CEO of Augintel. “Through this, we believe we will help them save time and make it easier to gain an understanding of the children and families they care for. As we work with more and more counties across Pennsylvania, we are excited to help each of them gain more value from the data they collect.”

