

Seamless Systems Promoting Independent Living

Scaling Sunshine Wheels with Veyo

Background

Born from over 30 years of experience in care, Sunshine Wheels is a non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) service exclusively dedicated to providing reliable wheelchair and ambulatory transportation services to individuals with mobility challenges. Launched in 2019, Sunshine Wheels is a division of New Horizons, Inc., a Connecticut-based and managed non-profit organization dedicated to enabling independent living. In addition to providing NEMT services through Sunshine Wheels, New Horizons, Inc. delivers a continuum of care that encompasses housing and support services for people with physical disabilities, as well as rehabilitation and inpatient nursing home care.

According to a 2006 report, approximately 3.6 million adults miss or delay non-emergency medical appointments due to transportation issues. For New Horizons, Inc., whose community consists primarily of seniors and individuals with disabilities, the issue was particularly stark. Although NEMT services were initially implemented to help bridge this gap, errors and missed rides were a far too common experience.

In the past, New Horizons, Inc. residents, many of whom did not have the capacity to return home by themselves, found themselves stranded at their doctor's office without a way home, sometimes even past closing hours. Other residents were never even able to get to their clinicians, forcing them to miss critical appointments such as dialysis or pre-surgical meetings.

Carol Fitzgerald, CEO of New Horizons, Inc., recognized the need for a sustainable solution. "Our mission is to promote independent living," said Fitzgerald. "Without timely, proper medical care, it's difficult to do that. And New Horizons, Inc. is committed to becoming part of the solution to provide reliable accessible transportation."

A strong foundation

Fortunately, New Horizons was well-versed in transporting their residents for recreational purposes and decided to expand their service into medical transportation. They created Sunshine Wheels as a social enterprise, putting its proceeds back towards New Horizons' charitable mission. With years of experience in transporting residents with mobility challenges, the staff at Sunshine Wheels possessed not only a deep knowledge of wheelchairs, equipment, and patient safety, but also a nuanced understanding of the balance between respecting individuals' right to be independent while also being there to meet their needs -- difficult lines to navigate without the right experience and training.

As a result, Sunshine Wheels was ready to deploy a dependable, caring, safe and reliable fleet. To do that, they needed a powerful yet simple system to manage scheduling across all their clients as they scaled that maintained their standard of service and care.



Veyo's turnkey solution

Veyo partnered with Sunshine Wheels to implement simple transportation scheduling and payment operations. When a healthcare facility decides to choose Sunshine Wheels as a preferred NEMT provider, Veyo sets them up with Rideview, a streamlined platform that allows healthcare facilities or nursing homes to book transportation through a simple-to-use web portal. Through RideView, client staff are able to not only book trips with ease, but also access real-time information for every trip, such as trip status, pickup and drop-off details, and contact information on one user-friendly interface.

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Carol Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer, New Horizons, Inc.

In addition to simplifying ride scheduling, Veyo made it easy for Sunshine Wheels to meet the constantly-growing demand for their services. Through Veyo's transportation provider portal, designed to support trips for Medicaid recipients, Sunshine Wheels can manage incoming trip requests, driver schedules, and trip details. By lifting the burden of developing a ride booking platform and taking over time-consuming invoicing work, Veyo allows Sunshine Wheels to focus on what they do best – providing exceptional care.

“The system has been seamless,” Fitzgerald said. “Sunshine Wheels can add 50 new clients with ease. Their system is set up well for vendors like us.”

To Sunshine Wheels, the personal relationship they have developed with Veyo is just as important as the technical and operational work they've done together. From the outset, Sunshine Wheels has been able to look to Veyo as a supportive partner that is equally invested in their success. And that success has paid off – Sunshine Wheels was recently named one of Veyo's Top Performing Providers in the state of Connecticut.



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- Carol Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer, New Horizons, Inc.

In collaboration with Veyo, Sunshine Wheels has completed over 4,000 trips and expanded their service region to serve clients across the state. “What we envisioned a year and a half ago when we began our partnership with Veyo has really exceeded our expectations,” said Fitzgerald. “If we make just one part of the healthcare experience easier for people who already face so much, then all our work will be time incredibly well spent.”

