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## NEVADA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REFERRALS CASE STUDY

### Revolutionizing Nevada's Behavioral Health Referrals: A Leap Forward for 988 Suicide Prevention and Crisis Lifeline Services

*How OpenBeds® dramatically increased behavioral health  
access for 988 callers.*

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#### INTRODUCTION

In 2020, Nevada ranked 51st in the nation overall for mental health, a ranking that indicates a high prevalence of mental illness, including substance use disorder (SUD), and low levels of access to mental healthcare. To help, that same year Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) made a strategic move to improve support for Nevadans who were experiencing behavioral health issues, including suicidal ideation, sexual or domestic abuse and SUD.

Leveraging grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DHHS initiated a statewide program, Nevada Health Connection, to encourage the use of the OpenBeds platform from Bamboo Health. Within this program, healthcare organizations and behavioral health providers across the state were granted access to OpenBeds, funded by the grant. OpenBeds, a closed-loop referral system, bridges individuals requiring assistance with mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers. The utilization of this platform by social workers and clinicians across the state catalyzed a significant increase in electronic referrals, meeting the urgent needs of Nevadans for behavioral health services.

As of today, over two dozen significant healthcare organizations across Nevada utilize OpenBeds. However, the state's principal source of OpenBeds referrals is the Crisis Support Services of Nevada (CSSNV), which operates the state's 988 Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support Lifeline. **In 2022, CSSNV was responsible for 68% of the over 3,200 OpenBeds referrals directed to community behavioral health providers in Nevada.** OpenBeds' availability catalyzed a shift in CSSNV's referral process, which increased the probability of successfully linking individuals in crisis to critical support services like crisis stabilization, peer support, group homes, recovery support and withdrawal management.

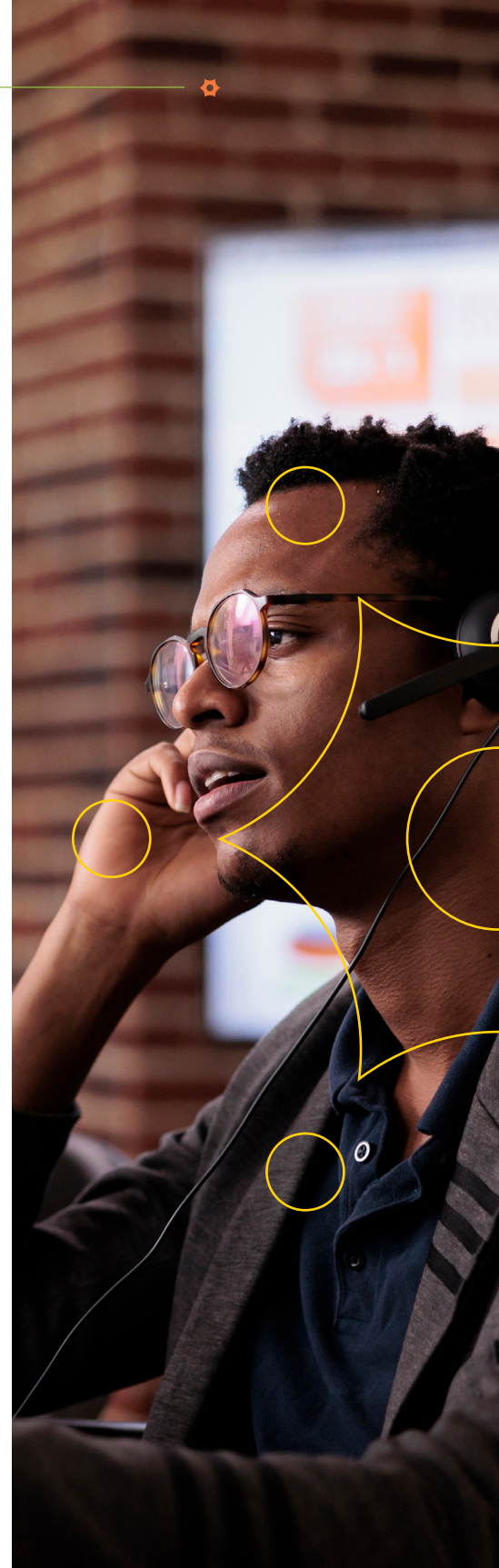


# The Challenge

**Established in 1966, CSSNV today handles all of Nevada's 988 Lifeline calls, helping about 90,000 people a year.** Like every other 988 Lifeline nationwide, CSSNV grapples with the challenge of maintaining a roster of trained professionals to offer effective aid to callers. To handle its vast number of callers with limited staff, CSSNV has historically given those reaching out through call, text or chat a list of local resources to contact independently. During pressing situations, CSSNV case managers would place callers on hold while they scoured the web for nearby behavioral health providers who offered the necessary services. After identifying a provider that accepted the caller's insurance, the case manager would then link them with the caller. Unfortunately, CSSNV lacked an electronic method to monitor if callers followed through with the referred service. Those few referrals that were made often lacked crucial information, such as the challenges callers had obtaining food, transportation or housing that could be addressed by a case manager.

"We were doing it manually for every provider one by one," explained Mele Eteuati, Case Management Coordinator for CSSNV. "That process was really tiring for our staff and not at all ideal."

The absence of a cohesive referral platform that incorporates an extensive database of behavioral health provider organizations detailing their specialties and accepted insurances posed limitations to CSSNV staff, restricting them to information that could be found through internet searches or phone calls. Consequently, numerous behavioral health providers equipped to take referrals remained undiscovered by the CSSNV staff who catered to callers all over Nevada. Furthermore, managing and tracking the referrals was a convoluted process that relied entirely on manual work.





# The Solution

In 2021, Nevada Health Connections staff reached out to CSSNV to make the grant-funded OpenBeds platform available at no cost to the organization. OpenBeds shows current and up-to-date information on available behavioral health treatment resources and provides an automated, standardized process for making and tracking referrals that speeds access to care, fosters better collaboration and coordination and improves patient outcomes. With OpenBeds, CSSNV staff can identify provider organizations in real time that accept the patients' insurance type, provide the required treatments and verify services are located near the patients' home. **The platform also enables staff to send electronic referrals to three providers at once rather than the one-off manual approach.**





# The Solution

OpenBeds' ability to capture the caller's insurance information, or the lack of it, in the referral is especially valuable, said Eteuati. "We deal with a vulnerable population, including people who have never used their insurance before because they're covered under a parent's insurance or their parents were able to get them qualified for Medicaid, and they have never had real job opportunities. There are also the elderly adults with Medicare, and Nevada's un-housed citizens. It's been super hard to get this particular population into treatment. OpenBeds has allowed us to help facilitate them when no one else can."

Moreover, because OpenBeds also captures social determinants of health within a referral, patients are "not just getting into treatment, whether for mental health or substance abuse, but they will actually get help finding a shelter they can go to, getting connected to low-cost or no-cost medical services or a food pantry," shared Eteuati.

**"For us, OpenBeds is vital to getting people the behavioral healthcare and other services they need to thrive. We look forward to getting even more providers participating in the OpenBeds platform so we can deliver comprehensive service to every Nevadan who experiences a behavioral health crisis."**

– Rachelle Pellissier, Executive Director of CSSNV





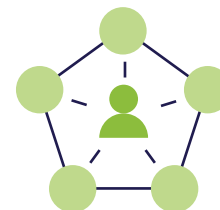


# The Results

The adoption of the OpenBeds platform has greatly simplified the process for CSSNV case managers to guide callers to necessary behavioral health services. Prior to this platform's integration, the call center staff was restricted in transitioning callers to community providers. The platform's efficiency in promoting a smooth referral process enables the generation of electronic referrals, consequently lessening the workload for case managers and enhancing the service provided to 988 callers. **In 2022, CSSNV case managers generated 2,172 referrals, accounting for almost three-quarters of the state's total OpenBeds referrals.**

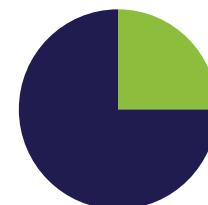
Beyond driving a surge in referrals, OpenBeds also enables CSSNV to better track the process. "OpenBeds time dates and stamps everything, so it keeps everyone accountable, not just us but also the provider organizations," said Eteuati. "We want to be sure participants are actually getting the support they need, not just being given a number to call when they're in crisis."

**"We love OpenBeds," she concluded. "It is our number one go-to when we're looking for treatment in Nevada for residents."**



## 2,172

**Number of referrals generated by CSSNV case managers in 2022**



## 75%

**Proportion of total OpenBeds referrals in Nevada which came from CSSNV**



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# About Bamboo Health

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Bamboo Health, the leader in Real-Time Care Intelligence™, delivers actionable insights on a patient's physical, behavioral and social health—empowering healthcare professionals to provide the right care at the right time for the right outcomes. Delivered through our Smart Signals™ network—the largest and most interoperable care collaboration community in the nation—our insights improve more than 1 billion patient encounters a year across more than 2,500 hospitals, 8,000 post-acute facilities, 25,000 pharmacies, 32 health plans, 50 state governments and 1 million acute and ambulatory providers. Connect with Bamboo Health on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#). Visit [BambooHealth.com](https://bamboohealth.com) to learn more.



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