

# **NATIONAL HEALTH LINE SYMPOSIUM**

## **Making the Right Connections**

### **Presentation # 1**

**Assessment of Remote Agents to Deliver Health Line Services**

**April 27 & 28, 2006**

**Delta Ocean Pointe Resort**

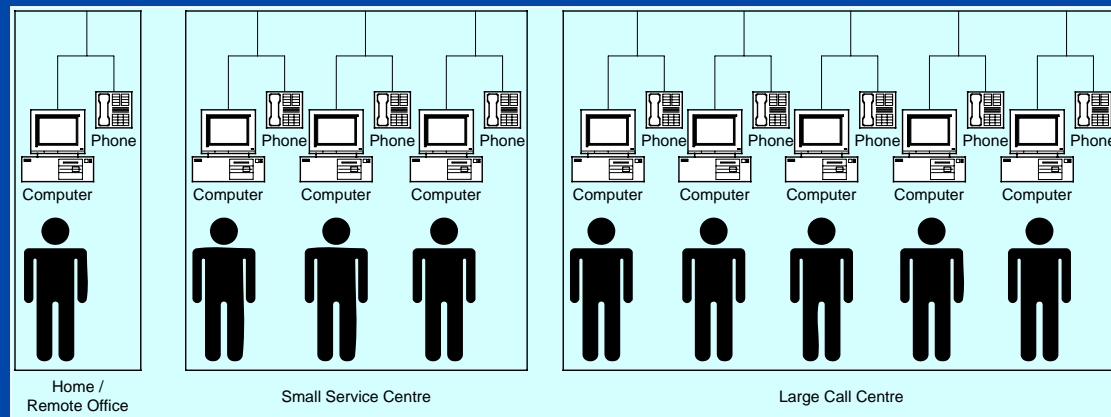
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# Remote Agent

Remote settings can be described as a continuum ranging from individuals working out of their homes on a personal computer to a small group of individuals located in a small centre (satellite centre). Each setting connects to a larger central facility.



# Study Components

- Literature Review
- Environmental Scan
- Technology Profile
- Jurisdictional Interviews
- Reference Architecture  
(Distributed Call Centre)

# Perspectives (Literature)

- Hardware/Software Capability
- Reliability and Stability
- Consistency in Service Quality
- Remote Agent Responsibility
- Privacy and Security
- Human Resource Utilization
- Service Availability
- Service Quality
- Support for New and Emerging Service Models
- Cost / Cost Saving

# Perspectives (Stakeholders)

- Security and Privacy
- Training and Monitoring
- Licensure, Unions and Workers Compensation
- Critical Mass
- Benefits

# Highlights

- Technology Requirements
- Primary Barriers to Implementation
- Jurisdictional Readiness
- Telecommuting
- Pilot Testing
- Economic Viability

# Technology Requirements

Each member of the Multi-jurisdictional Collaboration has the technology (on-site or through a vendor) to adopt remote agency.

Jurisdictions have state-of-the-art call centre hardware and software configurations that meet or exceed industry standards.

These configurations include connecting and monitoring remote agents either as individuals or smaller groups.

# Primary Barrier to Implementation

Issues of security and privacy are predominate factors.

Concern that home-based remote agents in particular are vulnerable to both security and privacy breaches (fire, theft, unauthorized information access).



# Jurisdictional Readiness

Enthusiasm for remote agency varies among jurisdictions.

Not all jurisdictions believe that remote agency will generate sufficient benefit for the money and time required.

One jurisdiction is already doing remote agency and one is ready/willing to test the concept.

# Telecommuting

Benefits can be accrued through telecommuting.

Issues of personality, work style, and comfort with technology will impact the willingness and appropriateness of individuals to work in remote settings.

# Pilot Testing

Pilot testing is recommended for those jurisdictions willing to adopt remote agency.

Distributed systems have unique characteristics and like most new technology require an initial stage of testing to:

1. Ensure user (the providing agency) is comfortable applying the technology
2. Transparency of the technology is experienced by clients

# Economic Viability

For most jurisdictions, remote agency will be considered as part of supply and demand.

- High call volume is increasing pressures on jurisdictions to recruit sufficient staff
- Decreasing cost and increasing efficiency not a pressing issue – besides cost comparison is difficult to assess without established comparators.