



# Reimagining public health services

As technological limitations disappear, health agencies have the opportunity to explore new possibilities



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**ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY** have played a key role in helping health and human services agencies respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, cloud-based platform-as-a-service technology is accelerating the speed to value and activation time by avoiding the need to establish an on-premises environment and acquire and install software. Deploying chatbots also expands service availability 24/7 while allowing live agents to focus on more complex interactions.

A secure, always-on platform like Salesforce is the new baseline for competency – giving agencies the capabilities they need to be efficient, transparent and resilient. In addition,

MuleSoft offers the ability to use APIs to identify, integrate and aggregate data and create a single source of truth. And Tableau helps agencies visualize data to inform decisions and communicate insights internally and externally in a timely manner across multiple channels.

That approach enables agencies to deploy functionality in days and weeks rather than months and years and to configure software through clicks rather than writing code. As a result, health and state agencies leverage Salesforce’s technology for manual contact tracing (e.g., [state of Rhode Island](#)), scheduling for COVID-19 testing (e.g., [city of Chicago](#)), quarantine management and vaccine management (e.g., [Lake County, Illinois](#)).

## Reevaluating customer experience in a pandemic

Dated technology that’s not integrated slows the response to emergencies and increases the level of effort required to meet service demands, which impacts citizen experience. Having a seamless interaction is especially relevant for individuals experiencing emergencies, who may not be an agency’s typical customer but have urgent needs and higher expectations for service levels and channel availability.

Agencies should use this opportunity to reimagine the customer experience by identifying any service limitations they’re experiencing, soliciting customer feedback and connecting with interagency partners to create a unified approach to delivering excellent service.

Achieving such service delivery requires establishing a multidisciplinary team that includes people who are experienced in mapping and assessing internal processes and workflows, as well as adept at communicating the change underway to the broader organization.

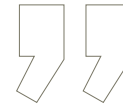
Public-sector Salesforce customers have access to a Global Public Sector Digital Transformation SPARK team. This team can help identify low-effort, high-reward opportunities for technological improvement, develop return-on-investment analyses to support project funding and assist with application rationalization. Application rationalization provides insight to help determine which single-purpose solutions can be brought onto a unified platform.

To transform service delivery and citizen experience, agencies should especially focus





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on the customer and employee engagement layer, leveraging technology to provide a holistic view for employees and a seamless experience for customers.

**Opening the door to bigger, bolder innovations**

During the response to COVID-19, we overcame many of the technical limitations that used to slow down innovation. One case in point: Vaccines have typically taken four to

seven years to come to market, but researchers and manufacturers have developed effective coronavirus vaccines within 10 months of the start of the pandemic.

Health and human services agencies should engage with other government agencies and the American Public Human Services Association, the American Public Health Association and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials to explore possible opportunities.

The greatest failure we face is a failure of imagination. It's time to think beyond where we are today and reach for what's possible. This is an opportunity to do something much bolder, bigger and more responsive than we might have imagined before the pandemic. ■

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