

# HOW BRISTOL HOSPICE MAKES PROGRESS



## BRISTOL HOSPICE ENSURES SEAMLESS CARE MANAGEMENT WITH SUNCOAST SOLUTIONS AND PROGRESS SOFTWARE

When the recent tsunami hit Hawaii, Christie Franklin's sole focus was on the well-being of her hospice patients. With utilities down and the ensuing chaos, communication in and out of the state was minimal. But the potential repercussions of such an event were front and center in Franklin's mind when she established Bristol Hospice five years ago. Realizing the vital role technology plays in today's society, Franklin incorporated the value of technology into the very foundation of the company. Consequently, the day the tsunami hit the islands, she was able to keep in touch with her local staff, receive updates on the condition of the patients and communicate with the affected families.



### **CHALLENGE**

*Ensure seamless customer care across its distributed business*

### **SOLUTION**

*Suncoast Solutions Hospice, Home Health, Palliative Care, and End-of-Life software*

### **BENEFIT**

*Increased efficiency and visibility into specific needs of each location.; quick and easy adoption of new compliance regulations and integration with other IT systems; eLearning streamlines onboarding and compliance processes*

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## SUNCOAST OFFERS MARKET-LEADING TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY EXPERTISE



Bristol Hospice is focused on providing a family centered approach in the delivery of hospice services throughout its local communities. The company currently operates in California, Utah, Hawaii, and Georgia.

In 2006, Avalon Heath Care Group hired Christie Franklin as President of Bristol Hospice to develop a new, freestanding hospice company. From the very beginning, Franklin focused on building a strong foundation and meeting the highest standards possible. Over time, the company has established itself as a thought leader within its industry, focused on preserving, and building a better hospice model of the future. Bristol maintains its membership with all of the national organizations, including NHPCO, and participates in numerous research projects, studies and committees. To maintain the highest quality of care for its patients and families, all of Bristol's locations are CHAP accredited (Community Health Accreditation Program).

From the start, Franklin understood the key role technology would play in the future success of the organization. "If the clinical care and quality are right, everything else falls into place. And a key to maintaining that quality is efficiency, accuracy, and insight—all of which rely on having the right tools."

Franklin researched the various options on the market and ultimately chose Suncoast Solutions, a Progress Software partner. "I hadn't used Suncoast before, but I knew of them and I had tremendous respect for the organization's leadership. We had ambitious plans to expand the organization into new markets from coast to coast. Not only were we looking for a strong IT platform to drive our business, we also wanted to partner with a technology leader in this space that intimately understood our business, our specific requirements and the need to quickly comply with new regulations. Suncoast offered us both market-leading technology as well as industry expertise."

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## DRIVING NEW EFFICIENCIES AND VISIBILITY ACROSS ITS DISTRIBUTED BUSINESS

As Franklin worked on building Bristol, she had essentially one additional person to help. “I know what it’s like to implement Suncoast from ground zero; the entire process went very smoothly. Now, not a day goes by that we don’t leverage some aspect of our Suncoast solution.”

### ***User-friendly front-end and centralized back-end for billing and comprehensive reporting***

Bristol’s situation is unique in that it was a startup company. “Some of the markets we entered had far more hospice knowledge than others,” explains Franklin. “So having a system with a user-friendly interface was essential in getting the locations up and running quickly.” The company has standardized Solution’s front end with the appropriate tools for managing patient information and finances, and it has centralized the billing process for all locations through its Utah central billing office. “Through established processes, Suncoast enables a system of checks and balances; for our billing that has proven to be very, very successful.”

Franklin says the information gleaned from their Suncoast reports have prompted Bristol to remodel every single program they have, making minor adjustments to accommodate the specific needs of each location. Every two weeks Bristol’s management team reviews reports focused on the productivity, referrals, admissions, census data, and finances of the individual locations.

“This enables us to proactively monitor what is happening at each location and identify what can be done to better support those locations. We review those reports and the relevant data with our locations and their teams so they can better understand where their referrals are coming from and how they’re responding. We can look at the conversion rate to ensure we have adequate staffing in place and that we have the operational supports in place to proactively service the local communities. I’m a firm believer that I can’t affect the change at the top. I have to affect it through those leaders that are running those programs every minute of every day. So giving them

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***“[With Suncoast] we are able to make educated decisions about the future of our business based on solid facts.”***

*Christie Franklin  
President  
Bristol Hospice*

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access to their data and teaching them what to look for is also a key to maintaining success.”

Suncoast’s reports are also used by the board for strategic planning. “When we’re studying a new startup or conducting strategic planning, we will utilize those reports to look at trending—re-hospitalization referral trending, the growth of the program, etc. We are able to make educated decisions about the future of our business based on solid facts.”

### ***eLearning Program Streamlines Onboarding and Compliance Processes***

Bristol Hospice is taking advantage of Suncoast’s eLearning program. “We have integrated this program as part of our orientation process and it has proven to be very successful; everyone loves it.” Bristol first used the program to onboard its new Atlanta location. Rather than incurring the costs of sending an employee onsite to conduct the training, Bristol was able to manage the entire process online.

The company is also leveraging the eLearning program as part of its compliance program. “To ensure we remain compliant with current and new regulations, we require mandatory training for all of Bristol’s staff and leadership once a year. With Suncoast we are able to conduct the training and then track the status and results in our HR and quality systems.”

Franklin compliments Suncoast’s dedication to keeping the eLearning program current as regulations change. “When there is a significant change, like MDS 3.0, we want that training for our staff as soon as possible. Being able to stay current and having a partner in the industry that understands what we need to prioritize is crucial. I really feel we have that with Suncoast.”

### ***Flexibility to Support Change and Future Requirements***

In recent years, a number of compliance regulations have been established. “Without a flexible system that quickly adapts to those changes and provides any necessary tracking, companies often experience a decline in productivity and even business growth,” explains Franklin. “But we have consistently grown our company through all of the new regulations. With Suncoast, we can quickly adapt and just roll those regulations and changes right into our operation.”

Over the next few years, Franklin says they plan to automate and centralize as many processes as possible in order to drive even greater efficiency through IT. “I think this will absolutely affect our quality of care and provide us far greater business agility. We will have access to even more information and the ability to make decisions more quickly. I also believe that it’s our responsibility to streamline our operations so we can keep our costs in alignment and keep our care delivery strong.”

The flexibility of Suncoast’s underlying Progress® OpenEdge® database also affords Bristol the flexibility to easily interface and integrate with other products and systems. “That possibility affords us numerous opportunities in the future; we aren’t limited in what we can do,” says Franklin.

### ***Emergency Preparedness***

Growing up in a hurricane-prone area her entire life, Franklin says the repercussions of such an event are always on her mind. “When we set up our offices and our technology platform we purposely structured it so that we could leverage all of our information—across locations—anytime, anywhere. In the event of an emergency we can quickly know which patients to prioritize, we can access all contact information if we need to get in touch with family members, we can track if any patients have been relocated to neighboring hospices, and we can provide those facilities with the patient’s medical history and critical pieces of information like medication dosage, etc.”

Unfortunately, Bristol was forced to test its emergency preparedness plan in response to the recent earthquake in Japan. The subsequent tsunami that hit Hawaii knocked out various utilities, including the phone system. “Because our systems are centralized, we were able to give our Hawaii location the support it needed, even from afar. I kept in touch with the local staff via our BlackBerries to help monitor the situation remotely and receive updates for the affected families.”

## **A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

With plans to continue its expansion across the U.S., Franklin says the company remains committed to utilizing technology to ensure seamless care management. For example, Bristol will use Suncoast for its new home care services. And it plans to take greater advantage of the Solution

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*Christie Franklin  
President  
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Intelligence capabilities by further expanding its dashboard to access more comparative benchmarking data across its various locations.

In the end, Franklin says it all comes down to delivering quality patient care. “We are a very young company, but we are progressive. Everything we do is geared toward the benefit of our patients. Suncoast shares our vision, our sense of commitment and our pioneering spirit. We look forward to partnering with them for the long-term.”

## BRISTOL HOSPICE

Bristol Hospice, LLC locations provide a bridge in the continuum of care delivery system; focusing on the pain and symptom management related to end-of-life needs. The company’s focus is on providing a family centered approach in the delivery of hospice services throughout its local communities. Bristol Hospice, LLC, currently operates in California, Utah, Hawaii, and Georgia. Additional expansion of operations is planned for in the future as indicated. For more information visit: [www.bristolhospice.com](http://www.bristolhospice.com).

## SUNCOAST SOLUTIONS

Suncoast Solutions is the leader in Hospice, Palliative Care and End-of-Life software. Suncoast Solutions provides world-class computer technology and support. The team is dedicated to helping hospice and home health organizations improve the quality of life for every patient. Suncoast Solutions’ comprehensive software helps organizations manage the processes related to each phase of the care continuum. For more information visit: [www.sncoast.com](http://www.sncoast.com).

## PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global software company that enables enterprises to be operationally responsive to changing conditions and customer interactions as they occur. Our goal is to enable our customers to capitalize on new opportunities, drive greater efficiencies, and reduce risk. Progress offers a comprehensive portfolio of best-in-class infrastructure software spanning event-driven visibility and real-time response, open integration, data access and integration, and application development and management—all supporting on-premises and SaaS/cloud deployments. Progress maximizes the benefits of operational responsiveness while minimizing IT complexity and total cost of ownership.

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