



# A VISIONARY HEALTH CENTER AT A TECHNOLOGY CROSSROAD

A conversation with Mr. Jamie Berrens, the CEO  
of Crossroad Health Center in Cincinnati, Ohio





## When growth and success lead to changes

Jamie Berrens joined Crossroad Health Center as its CFO in 2010 and one of the first things he recognized was the necessity of electronic medical records (EMRs). At the time, it made sense to support Crossroad's adoption of that technology by joining a shared network of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FHQCs), which would all be on the same platform. However, Crossroad's unique needs made the cooperative arrangement increasingly less tenable.

*"Even at the beginning, if we wanted to make a change in, say, our telephone system, we had to get approval from the five other FHQCs on the platform – so we lacked flexibility. As the number of FHQCs grew, founding members like us got less attention. So, we lacked timely service, too."*

-- Jamie Berrens

In short, it was time to find a better solution for the company's IT needs in general and selecting a better EMR vendor, specifically.

*"We wanted to work with the Athenahealth EMR system because they were cloud-based and had integrated billing capabilities. But everything else from our previous system was on servers and networks owned by the shared services group. So, really, we were starting from scratch."*

-- Jamie Berrens

## A new partnership and roadmap for success

Crossroad's leaders interviewed multiple service providers, ultimately selecting Nexus (acquired by Medicus IT in 2020). The organization's technology expertise played a role in the decision, but so did the personal rapport Berrens and his team developed with Strategy Analyst Sam Arman from the new IT company.

A pair of black dress shoes is positioned at the bottom of the page, as if standing on a road. The word "START" is painted in large, white, block letters on the asphalt surface directly in front of the shoes. The background is a blurred asphalt road with a white dashed line.



*"I was already working with other Cincinnati area health centers when I met Jamie and the Crossroad team at the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers conference in 2016. Hearing their story, it was easy to see where the Crossroad team's needs had outstripped their existing capabilities, which made it easy to identify the best ways for them to catch up with everything from EHR connectivity to servers and bandwidth."*

*-- Sam Arman, Strategy Analyst, Medicus IT.*

As Sam and the technical team were onboarding and preparing to help the organization transition away from the shared information services organization, Crossroad was finalizing a seemingly disconnected operational decision. The Health Center had made the decision to close one of its offices and open a brand new location in Cincinnati.

*"Sam was very proactive. He had a roadmap to take us where we needed to be. And even though there were a lot of parts and pieces in simultaneous motion, nothing fell through the cracks."*

*-- Jamie Berrens*

In addition to the challenges of relocating one of the offices, another issue arose: a lack of cooperation from Crossroad's existing vendor, the shared services group.

*"The shared services group was less than cooperative. And now, we were basically closing down operations at one office and setting up new operations at another. So, we were facing a much bigger challenge. But it was a challenge well within our wheelhouse, so I'm happy to say that we were able to pull it off."*

*-- Sam Arman*

## **Continued advancements and growth drive ongoing success**

The Medicus IT acquisition of Nexus, which took place a few years later, didn't pose any new challenges. Unlike some companies facing similar changes that might have encountered issues affecting clients, this transition was practically seamless.





*"I know most of our technology issues can be handled remotely, but when Medicus acquired Nexus, I still felt like it would be a lot easier to drive up to Columbus to talk to Sam than to drive to Atlanta. If something comes across my desk, it's usually a problem I need to address. So, the best sign of success has been that [the Medicus IT team] is rarely brought to my attention.*

*-- Jamie Berrens*

Today, both Medicus IT and Crossroad Health Center have grown since the initial projects that brought them together. But that growth has only served to reinforce the value of the Crossroad-Medicus IT relationship. In fact, the changes implemented when the two organizations started working together laid important groundwork for the more advanced capabilities that are now driving the way Crossroad supports health-care throughout Cincinnati.

*"That first network put us into the cloud. Now, we've extended into data mining, which informs what*

*quality measures we're meeting and exceeding, as well as where we can improve. It also allows us to identify, say, that a hundred patients are due for a diabetic checkup and then automatically send a direct message to them letting them know that they need to make an appointment and come see us. So, it's helping our quality measures. It's keeping us in touch with our patients. It's delivering value."*

*-- Jamie Berrens*

Even amidst both organizations' significant growth, Jamie Berrens says he can still count on Sam Arman to stay connected with him and the work at Crossroad.

*"Knowing that Sam's still looking out for us gives us an additional comfort level. He calls a few times a year just to ask how everything is going. We get together when he's in town for the Ohio Health Care Association conference, too. I think we can safely say that this relationship makes a meaningful difference in our ability to achieve our mission."*

*-- Jamie Berrens*





## About Crossroad Health Center

Founded in 1992, Crossroad Health Center is a faith-based organization that aims to offer care for the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Today, the organization serves nearly 13,000 children and adults across the greater Cincinnati and Harrison Ohio areas, with more than 80 staff across five locations.

## About Medicus IT

Medicus IT is committed to helping healthcare organizations leverage technology to optimize and transform care for better patient outcomes. More than just IT, Medicus delivers healthcare IT specifically designed for the unique operational, infrastructure, regulatory, and human concerns of healthcare. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with service centers in New Jersey, Ohio, Florida, Arizona, California, and North Carolina, Medicus IT serves over 6,000 providers, with over 40,000 users across 2000 locations. Together, we drive healthcare forward™.

For more information please  
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