

Syntasa's AI-First Locator Agent Connects Arizonans with the Right Local Opioid Treatment Resources

The State of Arizona has partnered with Syntasa and Google Cloud to expand access to treatment for Opioid Use Disorder using Syntasa's technology and Google AI. The AI-powered Provider Locator helps citizens anonymously find appropriate treatment coverage in their area for their individual needs.

BACKGROUND

More than five people die every day from opioid overdoses in the state of Arizona. In 2017, the governor of Arizona declared the opioid epidemic a statewide health emergency.

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), Arizona's Medicaid agency, offers health care programs to serve Arizona residents. As part of its effort to address the ongoing opioid crisis in the state, AHCCCS recognized the need to provide residents with the ability to quickly and easily find opioid-related services and treatment locations online. AHCCCS worked with data and AI experts Syntasa to build an AI-powered Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) Service Locator, enabling anyone in the state to find nearby services to treat Opioid Use Disorder as well as locate Naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal medication.

CHALLENGE

Citizen behavior has been shifting online for years, and the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated this trend. AHCCCS sought to build an accurate, easy-to-use, and comprehensive online portal to provide Arizonans with the information and resources they need to find opioid treatment services in real time. Previously, AHCCCS's website provided a static list of treatment centers in the state, but did not have any way to indicate whether centers were accepting new patients or show which services were offered at each location. There was a pressing need for a new system that would provide residents with reliable information when they needed it most.



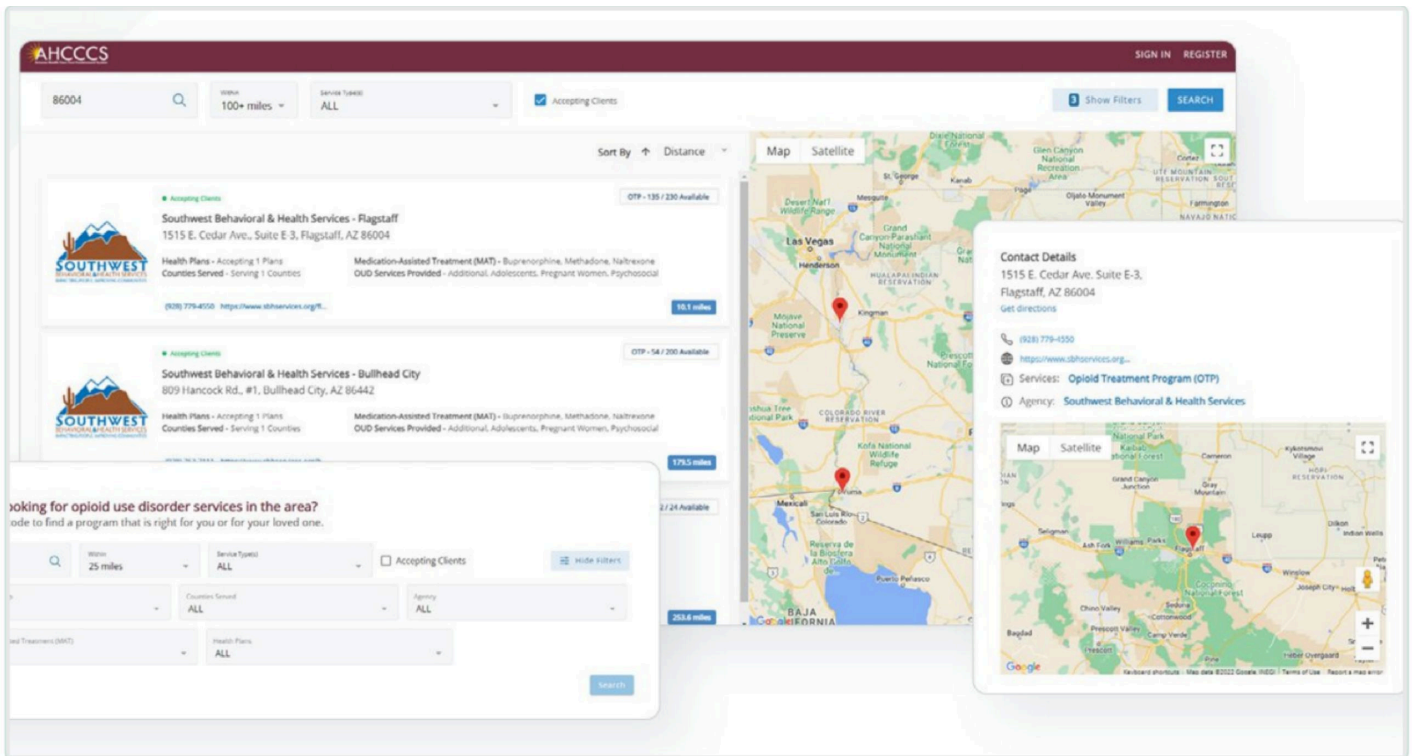
Key Points

- Improves awareness and access to substance abuse treatment centers across the state using an AI-powered Provider Locator Agent.
- Provides a comprehensive online portal with real-time, anonymous access.
- Provides for future growth and further use case development with scalable AI infrastructure.

SOLUTION

AHCCCS engaged Syntasa to build the web-based, AI-powered opioid services locator for its website. Powered by Google Cloud's Vertex AI and Gemini, the locator is intuitive, easy-to-use, and provides users with immediate insight into which treatment provider is right for their needs.

The AI Agent understands natural language queries in multiple languages through Google Translate technology. Users can simply ask "I need help with opioid addiction" or "Where can I find methadone treatment near me?" without needing to know complex medical terminology. The AI interprets what they need and matches them to appropriate resources in real time.



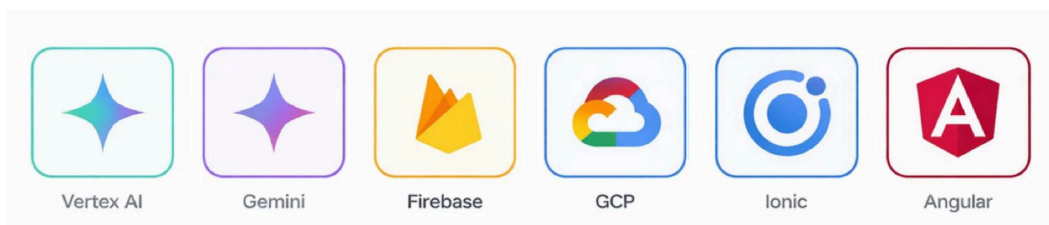
All opioid treatment providers serving Medicaid beneficiaries are required to list their services on the locator and keep their availability current, enabling potential patients to determine which provider is the best fit for them at the current moment. Other providers who do not serve Medicaid beneficiaries may also submit their information for inclusion on the site.

Users are shown a map view to determine proximity and can filter by service types to see residential vs. office-based programs and naloxone distributors, among other categories. The locator also offers an intuitive user experience for AHCCCS administrators on the backend, who can easily see which providers have not updated their information and approve new centers and other details added to the site.

TECHNOLOGY

Syntasa used Google-based and open source services including Ionic, Firebase, Firestore, and Angular to ensure scalability, ease of use, security, and real-time updates. The AI capabilities are powered by Google Cloud's Vertex AI and Gemini models.

The Ionic framework compiles the application into a package that can run across all browsers and devices, including iOS, Android, and Windows phone. Google Firebase is used as a cross-platform solution to provide backend services for the entire infrastructure, handling most of the authentication workflow as well as supporting account management operations like credential linking and password reset.



Google Firestore's real-time database module provides a NoSQL, JSON-based database solution that can be queried and written to directly from the client. It operates in real-time, synchronizing data between users, platforms, and sessions. Finally, Firebase Cloud Functions handles most event-based, server-side operations, for example sending one-time emails based on user actions or system data.

LOOKING FORWARD

The AI-powered Provider Locator demonstrates how public agencies can use modern technology to address urgent health crises without displacing existing systems. Since its launch, the platform has reached more than 20,000 individuals across 120 Arizona cities, and the underlying infrastructure (Syntasa + BigQuery, Vertex AI, and Looker Studio dashboards that surface usage trends and potential gaps in service) is built to scale alongside evolving public health needs.

The Provider Locator is continually updated with new features to meet the needs of the community. Upcoming enhancements include:

- **Virtual Care Access:** Seamless integration with Telehealth providers for instant support.
- **Expanded Care Points:** New listings for mobile treatment units and naloxone vending machines.
- **Voice-First Navigation:** A full conversational AI interface featuring natural voice-to-voice interaction.
- **Expanded Support:** Direct links to housing programs to address social determinants of health.
- **Enhanced Data:** Expanded clinical documentation to provide a smarter, more comprehensive knowledge base.
- **Simplified Sharing:** A redesigned "Share" feature for intuitive, one-click distribution of provider details.

Watch The Video

Hear from AHCCCS's Kate Dobler on how they're partnering with Google Cloud and Syntasa to use AI as a force for good.



Watch Now

"We had to create a system that was not only easy to use, but truly engaging... It was crucial to make it visually inviting and intuitive, ensuring people would feel comfortable using it instead of being confused. We're beyond grateful for the technical insights Google Cloud and Syntasa have contributed to this project."

Kate Dobler

State Opioid Treatment Authority (SOTA), AHCCCS



Syntasa's is a security-first Data and AI company specializing in digital behavior and large-scale analytics across government and commercial environments. Trusted by defense and intelligence agencies, government organizations, and global enterprises, Syntasa's platform integrates clickstream and enterprise data to power advanced AI, machine learning, composable customer data capabilities such as identity resolution, unified profiles, real-time personalization, audience activation, digital journey mapping, and AI-driven recommendations to drive measurable outcomes.

Syntasa is a Google Cloud Partner and our software is available in the GCP Marketplace.