

## The Samaritan Women Baltimore, Maryland



***“The customer service alone was worth the price of Penelope.”***

### **About The Samaritan Women**

Founded in Baltimore in 2007, The Samaritan Women established Maryland’s first long-term residential program for victims of domestic human trafficking. The faith-based organization offers quality care for sexually-exploited persons via transformative residential care programs, collaborative research, and supportive shelter mentorship.

### **Reasons Penelope was chosen**

- Configurable, cost-effective case management system that can track multiple programs in unique service delivery model
- Single and easily accessible source of truth for client information
- Emphasis on high-quality customer service and support at Athena Software

### **Benefits from Penelope**

- Records now stored in one secure system that removes burden of manual record keeping
- Shared system for scheduling appointments and tracking attendance
- Ability for teams to collaborate and share information securely
- Ease of reporting on key demographics and service usage

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## **Introduction**

The Samaritan Women (TSW) is a faith-based Baltimore nonprofit that provides long-term care to victims of domestic human trafficking. The organization was founded in 2007 and soon purchased an abandoned 23-acre estate, whose renovation led to the foundation of Maryland’s first long-term residential program for victims of domestic human trafficking.

TSW provides comprehensive care for women with complex trauma as the result of childhood sexual abuse, fatherlessness, poverty, neglect, substance abuse, and the relentless torture of having been sold in the commercial sex industry. The organization’s

healing program provides TSW's clients with therapeutic care, self-care, relational and life skills, spiritual formation, academic achievement, and vocational training.

In 2018, TSW purchased Penelope case management software to track and report on their services in a secure, cloud-based environment. Roslyn Lindner is the Graduate Program Manager at TSW's Institute for Shelter Care, and she recently shared with Athena the benefits that the organization is realizing from using Penelope software.

### **What was the main problem your organization was trying to solve with a new case management system?**

Our computers are not connected by a central server so everything had to be shared by emailing or transferring via a memory stick. With case managers, the department director, and the executive director all needing access to various client documents, it got to be a little convoluted.

We needed a system in which we could all easily access client information without having to dig through a paper file or find out who had what document.



*The Samaritan Women has been providing services to victims of domestic human trafficking since 2007.*



## **What factors did you consider before making your decision?**

The person who initiated our search for a case management system was looking at cost, accessibility, and something that we could customize to the somewhat unique needs of our program.

## **Why did you choose Penelope?**

There were many reasons we went with Penelope but I believe the greatest deciding factor was the team at Athena. Everyone was (and still are) extremely helpful, patient, and responsive. The customer service alone was worth the cost of Penelope. We also liked how customizable Penelope is, it has more than met our case management needs.

## **What was your implementation experience like?**

We started with just one person working with the Athena team to learn Penelope and customize the case management system to meet our needs. After that, another employee and I were trained. She used it mainly for administrative organization and I used it for case management. Since then, we've trained a couple of people.

So, it was a gradual deployment, training people as they needed to learn it. I found it was fairly easy to teach others the basics of what they would need to do their jobs. Penelope is largely intuitive once you know the basics.

***“We can pull demographic information, info on how many hours we spend doing different activities, and the services our clients use, in minutes rather than hours of digging through files and appointment calendars.”***

## **What issues has Penelope helped your organization solve?**

File sharing, appointment scheduling, and reporting have been the biggest issues Penelope has helped to solve. Appointments were kept on paper calendars which all needed to be updated when an appointment was scheduled, rescheduled, or cancelled. Updates did not always happen. With Penelope, the appointment is changed in one place and everyone can see it.



The reports we can pull on Penelope have also been extremely helpful. We can pull demographic information, info on how many hours we spend doing different activities, and the services our clients use in minutes, rather than hours of digging through files and appointment calendars.

### **How would you explain Penelope to someone who has never used it?**

Penelope is a system that manages client and organizational information, giving easy access to those who need the information and streamlining case management through shared access to files, appointments, and client services.

*“We’ve saved innumerable hours by having everything all together in one place with shared access among employees.”*

### **What measurable benefits have you seen since implementing Penelope?**

We haven’t measured anything specifically but I can definitely say that we’ve saved innumerable hours by having everything all together in one place with shared access among employees.

### **Would you recommend Penelope to other organizations? If so, why?**

Absolutely! More than anything else, I’d say the customer service puts Penelope above and beyond other case management systems that we looked into. Any problem we’ve encountered has been quickly solved by a friendly customer service person at Athena. The trainings are thorough and helpful and the technical support is very responsive. Penelope itself has been a blessing to our organization, but the customer support has made our experience even better!

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