

CA DHCS Teams Up with PCG to Lead the Way in SMC/OBC Certification



Case Study

The Client

California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

The Project

Enterprise Certification Management Support

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is California's State Medicaid Agency (SMA), which serves the largest Medicaid population in the country. As the SMA, DHCS understood the complexity associated with pursuing enhanced federal funding under a new certification model for its enterprise certification project portfolio, comprised of over 40 modular solutions. In light of this, DHCS partnered with the PCG Certification Management (PCM) team to both manage the certification project portfolio and provide guidance/support to each modular solution.

The Opportunity

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) had many questions regarding the new requirements for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Streamlined Modular Certification (SMC)/Outcomes Based Certification (OBC) process. There was uncertainty around what Medicaid system modules the state would modernize and how would they be prioritized. The state needed guidance on how to ensure their modernized Medicaid Enterprise System (MES) modules would pass CMS' Operational Readiness Reviews (ORRs) and Certification Reviews (CRs). The state also needed guidance on the selection of CMS required outcomes, help in determining whether to use state-specific outcomes, and assistance in developing meaningful and appropriate metrics to support their outcomes. This would be critical to securing millions of dollars in enhanced funding for the 12 million people supported by California's Medi-Cal program.

The Solution

DHCS was faced with serious challenges as a result of the transition to the new CMS SMC/OBC certification process. Up to that point, PCG had been providing Certification IV&V services to DHCS; however, the state realized that, to meet the new requirements for federal funding, additional support would be needed. To ensure this level of support, DHCS and PCG agreed to transition PCG's contract to provide comprehensive enterprise-level certification project portfolio management and oversight services.

Acting as a fully integrated team, DHCS and PCG worked in tandem to address the multitude of changes presented by the transition to the recently adopted SMC/OBC approach to certification. PCG's role included providing enhanced services to help each of the more than 40 MES solutions through the SMC/OBC certification lifecycle. PCG developed tools, processes, and provided support for:

- ✓ Advanced Planning Document (APD) assistance
- ✓ Operational Readiness Review (ORR)/Certification Review (CR) preparation and management
- ✓ Organization Change Management (OCM), testing and security compliance
- ✓ Outcomes and metrics development
- ✓ Medicaid Information Technology Architecture (MITA) State Self-Assessment (SS-A) and alternatives

These tools and support provided by PCG assisted DHCS in facing a variety of challenges, of which one primary challenge was developing metrics that would be both meaningful for the DHCS program to pass CMS scrutiny and be useful to support ongoing certification requirements. PCG helped DHCS develop these metrics and prepare for the ORR and CR reviews by facilitating the development and collection of the appropriate documents and having them ready for CMS. PCG helped ensure that testing and security requirements were met, and the program could clearly and accurately articulate how they met all the new requirements for OBC/SMC certification.

The Result

Collaboration between PCG and DHCS has resulted in the successful development of scalable and effective guidance as well as methods to ensure each modular solution team under the enterprise certification project portfolio has the foundation needed to overcome certification challenges by:

- ✓ Assessing all documentation, artifacts, and evidence for each modular solution
- ✓ Ensuring critical concerns commonly raised by CMS are appropriately mitigated (e.g., concerns related to Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information Systems [T-MSIS] reporting)

“By partnering with an experienced and knowledgeable firm, DHCS has achieved successful certification results in certifying six (6) California Medicaid solutions in a two-year timeframe. PCG participates in the oversight of the day-to-day operations and management of California’s modular solutions, helping to ensure alignment with DHCS’ overall certification strategy and compliance with CMS’ certification guidelines.”

– DHCS, Enterprise Certification Management team

This has led to tens of millions of dollars coming into the state through enhanced 90/10 federal funding for Design, Development, and Implementation (DD&I) and 75/25 funding for project Maintenance and Operations (M&O).

To learn more about PCG Certification Management (PCM) services for CA DHCS, contact us today.

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