
Tufts Health Plan Partners With Keane for HIPAA Compliance Solution

Abstract

Tufts Health Plan (THP) is one of the country's largest managed care plans. Committed to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), THP recognized that an enterprise-wide program to address HIPAA's Transactions and Code Sets standards would provide an impetus for establishing best practices that could be utilized to improve operational efficiencies across the organization and provide a solid foundation for future IT initiatives. Partnering with Keane for an innovative HIPAA solution that would also implement industry-proven, standardized processes, THP leveraged Keane's knowledge of HIPAA regulations and process improvement expertise. Through this partnership, THP successfully completed the transaction compliance phase of its HIPAA initiative on-time and within budget, through high quality code development processes. Simultaneously, processes were created to enable THP to reliably introduce new technology and business innovation with exceptional quality and predictability.

Client

Affiliated with some of the nation's premier specialists, hospitals, and healthcare centers, Tufts Health Plan (THP) provides a wide range of benefits and programs to nearly one million members. The company's mission is to set the standard for outstanding quality, service, and value in healthcare. As a result of this enterprise-wide dedication to continually improving quality, THP has garnered widespread recognition and numerous industry awards for customer service excellence.

Challenges

Looking beyond minimum compliance with HIPAA's Transactions and Code Sets standards, THP viewed implementing the mandated standardized codes and streamlined processes as an opportunity to establish best practices for future software development and IT operations. Facing compliance deadlines, THP needed to support specific electronic transactions using standardized formats or face significant financial penalties.

“Keane's Halifax ADC consistently provided us with high quality work that enabled us to achieve compliance with the HIPAA Transactions and Code Sets requirements within budget and ahead of the deadline.”

Palma Maguire, Director,
HIPAA PMO, Tufts Health Plan

Application and Infrastructure Solutions

With a strong focus on customer service, it was imperative that THP's claims processing functions not be affected by system outages or extensive application modifications resulting from the size and complexity of the HIPAA program. Leveraging Keane's process improvement expertise, thought leadership in HIPAA initiatives, and an existing outsourcing relationship for the claims processing applications, THP turned to Keane for a solution.

Solution

The result of the THP-Keane partnership ensured that processes related to electronic claims transactions were HIPAA compliant, while simultaneously establishing process improvements in order to create a high-performance IT organization. In the first phase of the program, Keane worked with THP to perform a gap analysis and risk assessment of the claims processing application. This analysis evaluated key transactions, identified critical compliance gaps, and determined the impact on existing processes.

With the analysis completed, Keane implemented application enhancements and new remittance processes to quickly translate incoming claims in the HIPAA-compliant format into THP's proprietary formats. In turn, the enhancements reformatted THP's outbound, proprietary transactions into HIPAA-compliant data to be received by its clients.

Keane provided on-site project management and an extended delivery team at Keane's Advanced Development

Center (ADC) in Halifax, Canada. This nearshore delivery option, rather than onsite support, provided THP with significant cost savings combined with high process maturity. The Halifax ADC drew on its process maturity expertise with the Software Engineering Institute's Capability Maturity Model (CMM) and applied Project Management Institute (PMI) best practices to provide:

- » Performance visibility through metrics
- » Quality assurance through continual design and plan review
- » Risk management through requirements tracking

Keane's Halifax ADC applied an iterative development and testing approach to verify that each deliverable met business objectives. More than 26,000 lines of code and 8,500 test cases were developed by the ADC — all of the highest quality.

Results

With HIPAA compliance for claims transactions processes achieved before the deadline, Keane provided a solution that enables THP to:

- » Communicate efficiently with clients through standardized data
- » Leverage new standardized processes to roll-out new projects quickly
- » Quickly adapt to support future business requirements through a high performance IT organization
- » Easily integrate new features due to up-to-date code documentation

“Keane's solution established best practices that set the standard for future IT development efforts and ensured we can react to any further changes in HIPAA transaction requirements quickly and painlessly.”

Palma Maguire, Director,
HIPAA PMO, Tufts Health Plan

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Keane's knowledge of the claims system significantly reduced development timeframes and ensured that claims functions were not interrupted. In addition, the processes for submitters to send electronic claims directly to THP was streamlined, which provides the opportunity to eliminate the expense of a clearinghouse. Due to these process improvements, THP

anticipates continued cost reductions per transaction over the next few years.

Keane's solution positions THP to flexibly address HIPAA legislation as it expands over the next several years. As new HIPAA mandates are introduced, Keane will provide ongoing maintenance and support to ensure compliance.

About Keane

Keane is an IT services firm headquartered in the US with more than 12,000 professionals worldwide. For 45 years, Keane has been an Application Services specialist with distinguished project management credentials. Today, we offer a flagship suite of Application Services, as well as Infrastructure and Business Process Outsourcing solutions delivered through onsite, nearshore, and offshore resources. Visit www.keane.com to learn how our projects, managed services, and outsourcing engagements deliver value for a range of businesses and government agencies.

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