



Case Stories: Streamlining Risk

Challenge — Limited Adherence/Poor Tracking

A year after its establishment within the CMS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI), the Project Management Office (PMO) commissioned a baseline maturity assessment and appointed a contractor to support the PMO objective. However, after the initial solution execution, it became apparent the processes were overly complex, difficult to follow, and provided little training to CMS personnel. This lack of training led to practice inconsistencies — resulting in poor risk tracking and ineffective risk reporting.

Solution — Consistent and Streamlined Risk

Edwards Performance Solutions (Edwards) revised Risk Best Practices and related artifacts by creating an internal working group focused on apprising and updating the policy. Our goal was to update the inventory of related artifacts, processes, and policies; initiate a formal change request; and construct standardized templates for consistent reporting by streamlining the process.

Using *PMBOK Guide*® and customer knowledge, we developed a unique model and testing environment. We also took the proprietary risk into account to provide current and innovative dashboard reporting.

Our initial approach applied a practice rigorous enough to ensure diligence while allowing for flexibility in defining communications and escalation paths. The amended practice workflow improved efficiency and documented deviations from the defined processes.

Effectively tracking and reporting risks allows clients to embrace risk management by recognizing and mitigating risks more successfully.



Edwards held a kickoff meeting to review the existing best practice policy document – identifying gaps and assigning content area Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). We took ownership of the overall document, developing an update and review schedule, and managing distributed assignments to the team SharePoint site for consistency. Our PMI® Risk Management Professionals ensured the practice aligned with CMS’ overall Risk vision and maintained compliance.

Benefit – Unified Risk Approach

All 17 Affordable Care Act (ACA) Models we support have incorporated proactive Risk Reporting, following the updated Risk Process Plan. As a result, Model dashboards include more thorough Risk Response updates which can be easily tracked and monitored; allowing stakeholders to mitigate any risks which may arise and better meet the Center’s goals and objectives.

Because of our recommended and implemented solution, the CMS Risk Practice is easier to comprehend and apply. The institutionalized risk practice training allows for reporting consistency of program risks, specific ratings, as well as overall mitigation strategies and responses. The updated process, including real-time program dashboards, results in effective reporting of all program milestones, budget detail, and risk mitigation for high-rated risks – providing a more standard, consistent, and streamlined approach for capturing and reporting risks.

About Edwards

Edwards Performance Solutions helps clients increase operational performance by finding ways to improve productivity, profitability, and security. We are a Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB) with two decades of experience working with both government and commercial clients. By delivering the highest quality services and addressing cyber vulnerabilities, we ensure operational excellence and performance to drive overall mission success.

Take Note

- Consistency was paramount to providing an overview to key stakeholders and critical to facilitate the changes made at CMS
- Edwards’ consistent approach ensures one voice, formatting, references, and change logs are maintained
- Implemented a training process (leveraging our proven Project Management Information Systems [PMIS] tools and approach); instructing users to better understand and utilize the new approaches
- Edwards has delivered 99 courses that have served 880 students over the course of the last 5 years and resulted in an increase in tracking Innovation Center Risks