



A FIRST DATA CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY:

FIRST DATA GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS AND THE STATE OF ARKANSAS PARTNER TO DEVELOP HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE

Client

State of Arkansas

Challenge

Bring public and private entities together to implement Arkansas' Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) in accordance with the Affordable Care Act

Solutions

First Data Stakeholder Engagement Model

Results

The state of Arkansas is on schedule to implement a Health Insurance Exchange for the 2014 calendar year

Like most states across the U.S., the state of Arkansas is working to create a Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) program in accordance with the Affordable Care Act. Creating such a program requires cooperation among many organizations and interests, including government agencies, key organization leaders, representatives of the Governor's office, various providers of medical insurance plans, and a major university healthcare provider. Collectively, these stakeholders have the knowledge, experience, and many of the resources to develop the Arkansas HIX. However, they lack an independent planning coordinator to get them all working toward the same goal—delivering Arkansans a healthcare marketplace to easily purchase quality health insurance plans.

To help navigate the challenging and complex medical, legal, and technical demands associated with the Affordable Care Act and launch a HIX for Arkansans in 2014, the state of Arkansas chose First Data Government Solutions.

By enlisting stakeholders at multiple levels, the Stakeholder Engagement Model built support for the initiative, improved communication and supported better resistance management.

The Challenge

Federally mandated programs can be complex and require rigorous attention to detail to ensure all requisites and deadlines are met. The Affordable Care Act is no exception. So when the state of Arkansas set out to create a Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) in compliance with the Act they knew in order to be successful they would have to do more than simply combine resources: they needed to align resources.

Alignment of resources required that the state understand the following: the current roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and how each could contribute to the new HIX; the assets within the state that could be leveraged for the Exchange; the risks and issues that each entity perceived at the start of the project, and the anticipated impact on their existing businesses. They also needed to identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures and routine functions of the agencies and other stakeholders; the expected financial and resource impact of the Exchange; the perceived benefits of the Exchange, and the desired outcomes for the state of Arkansas and its residents. And, most importantly, they needed all parties involved to reach a mutually acceptable solution as efficiently as possible in order to meet deadlines.

The Solution

To address the challenges inherent with tackling an initiative that encompasses in-depth collaboration across public and private entities the State of Arkansas leveraged First Data's Stakeholder Engagement Model.

The Model enlists stakeholders at multiple levels through the formation of a sponsorship network and a clearly defined leadership structure. A Steering Committee provides active and visible leadership and also secures and garners the necessary political and financial support for a long-term transformation. Two Advisory Committees support the Steering Committee—Health Plan Management and Consumer Assistance. The Health Plan Management Advisory Committee focuses on the definition and delivery of the Qualified Health Plan (QHP) guidelines and the Consumer Assistance Advisory Committee focuses on the Navigator guidelines, Outreach efforts and Consumer Complaint Resolution.

The Results

The state of Arkansas addressed critical objectives and is on target to implement a State Partnership Insurance Exchange for the 2014 calendar year. State legislation passed in 2013 authorizes the state to pursue a state based exchange for subsequent years.

The Stakeholder Engagement Model established the leadership body(s) that aligned roles and responsibilities, made decisions, allocated resources and provided ongoing support to sustain Arkansas's Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) as well as current in-flight projects. The Model also established a structure that is sustainable across political administrations and can assist in developing and managing key relationships at all levels. For example, Advisory Committee representation on the Steering Committee supported early and continued stakeholder involvement and directly addressed the request from Arkansas stakeholders to "have a seat at the decision-making table."