

# Integrating human services to **enhance results**

## **New York City's HHS-Connect project**



Having recognized the benefits of leveraging modern technology and coordinating agency practices to deliver more effective and efficient health and human services to New Yorkers, the city administration needed to ensure that the integration initiative achieved both its strategic vision and financial goals.

### **Ensuring effective outcomes**

With benefits access and service delivery responsibility in NYC spanning nine health and human services agencies (Human Resources Administration, Department of Homeless Services, Health and Hospitals Corporation, Administration for Children's Services, Department for the Aging, Department of

Correction, Department of Probation, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene), each with their own legacy applications, interface policies and information exchange processes, it was clear that the integration project – known as HHS-Connect – was going to be a massive and complex undertaking for the city. What's more, with more than a hundred million dollars worth of budget on the line, it would be

vital that the project be managed as efficiently as possible and with the highest level of accountability.

To achieve this, the administration recognized that they would need to engage an independent and experienced partner who could provide objective assessments of whether the project was being delivered effectively, taking advantage of efficiencies and aligned to policy objectives and global best practices.

## Tapping into deep experience

Recognizing their extensive Project Management and Quality Assurance (PM/QA) experience and their deep insight into the unique intricacies of the NYC health and human services marketplace, the city administration engaged KPMG in the US to provide trusted and independent advice on various aspects of the integration project.

Having worked closely with the city between 2004 and 2007 to deploy the ACCESS NYC program which created a web-based tool that allowed residents to screen for eligibility for a wide range of service programs including TANF (the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program), public health insurance (including Medicaid) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), the KPMG team leveraged

their unique depth of insight into the integration challenges faced by NYC to help support the development of this new and expanded integration initiative.

The administration also looked to KPMG's team of professionals to develop the initial project requirements that would be used to steer the implementation and, based on those requirements, assist the city in the selection of the systems integrator that would manage the project. KPMG would then be responsible for conducting PM/QA services to the administration to deliver the project as efficiently and effectively as possible.

## Connecting the dots

By leveraging KPMG's deep subject matter expertise, the team was quickly able to assess the fundamental requirements of the nine different government income security agencies

and identify the commonalities that would be key to achieving the proposed integration.

With the project requirements in hand, the KPMG team set about assisting the city administration in defining the approach and process for identifying and engaging a systems integrator capable of executing the complex project requirements to a high standard.

Utilizing their proprietary PM/QA methodology, the KPMG team – on an ongoing basis – has also been instrumental in helping the administration to identify risks that could result in project failures or add unnecessary complexity, thereby enabling the project team to keep the program on track and achieve objectives.

## A recognized success story

HHS-Connect has already achieved a number of significant milestones including the launch of the new Worker Portal which integrates the various HHS agencies to allow greater collaboration and effective data sharing. In turn, the portal has improved how the agencies serve their common clients by creating a single agency database that includes information on client demographics, family composition, and benefit details.

Largely due to the PM/QA services delivered by KPMG in the US, the project has been widely hailed as a success and has created a new leading practice for major cities around the world.

“KPMG in the US brought a deep set of capabilities and experiences to the project that have added value in almost every step from design through to implementation,” noted **Isidore Sobkowski, CIO and Executive Director of New York City's HHS-Connect**. “We've relied on KPMG's team to help us not only identify potential issues, but also to work through risk mitigation options to help us deliver real value for the tax payers' investment.”

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