



**CMMI** Institute

# OBSERVATIONS OF IMPLEMENTING CMMI IN A HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND IT SETTING

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# LIVANTA

- Livanta is an IT based private government contractor based out of Annapolis Junction, MD and Las Vegas, NV.
- Livanta holds multiple federal contracts, primarily with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), specifically in the realm of medical chart reviews.
- Livanta considers itself an IT based company because the tools and platforms used were built and are maintained internally (CompassWeb, Zuider, etc.).
- Because of the system ownership, Livanta's IT costs generally run higher than normal, but at a huge cost savings to overall labor costs.

## LIVANTA: BFCC-QIO

- Of the contracts Livanta holds, the Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO) is the largest and most significant.
- Being a \$170 million contract, Livanta oversees Medicare for 19 states in the West Coast, New England and Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.
- Annually, Livanta processes around 100,000 Medicare appeals, Quality of Care investigations and Sanction panels and determinations.
- Livanta just took it's one millionth phone call just a few weeks ago.
- These volumes are only possible through the high-volume functionality of our system CompassWeb.

# COMPASSWEB

- In short, CompassWeb is a Case Review Management System which integrates with other software systems.
- It is built upon a Lean User-Experience (UX) Design, eliminating unnecessary steps in the intake process and providing a framework for built-in quality. (i.e. each screen a call-center representative sees and fills out must be complete before the system will allow them to move on to the next screen.)
- The system is also built upon requirements spelled out by CMS for case review functions, ensuring compliance to the general work detailed out by the contract.
- Includes full reporting functions, access to real-time data at anytime, easy to learn and fully tailorable to comply with ongoing new legislation.

# CMMI AT LIVANTA

- Livanta implemented CMMI only in the IT department for the following reasons:
  1. The company grew from 35 employees to over 300 in a matter of a six-month time period;
  2. Livanta has already obtained and implemented the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards throughout the company;
  3. The company is a heavily IT based company and the platforms which allow us to complete the work we do are our own internal programs.

# APPRAISAL TEAM

- Livanta used a multi-disciplinary approach to its Appraisal Team.
- The team had representatives from multiple departments outside of IT to harness the knowledge of the entire operations life-cycle.
- Going through the whole CMMI training and Appraisal Team training was key to building synergy as everyone started from “ground-zero” in their CMMI knowledge.
- One of the keys to success in building your Appraisal Team is to pick people who not only understand the operational life-cycle of the work being evaluated, but who possess the ability to see the greater picture, the 30,000 foot view.
- ***What are the key attributes in someone who has the capacity to see the bigger picture?” Humility and teachability.***

# APPRAISAL TEAM: START TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER

- Starting your Appraisal team from “ground-zero” may have many benefits. For Livanta, it did. The training is robust and takes a lot of time.
- It takes time to not just learn the language of CMMI, but to start practicing it and using it regularly in your discussions.
- Going through the six months to a year of preparation can be a long arduous process, especially for individuals who have never experienced/aren't familiar with CMMI. Do what you can to focus on building that strong team. (i.e. if you have a multi-site operation, invest in allowing the team to physically be together a different points throughout the process to have that personal connection and to create a shared experience).

# APPRAISAL TEAM: START TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER

- True success in an organizations' CMMI implementation and in the Appraisal Team comes with a commitment to be sincere.
- You will only rob yourself of achieving the maximum outcome of your investment in CMMI if you seek to “get the piece of paper.” At Livanta, one of the keys to success in the Appraisal Team was a commitment from the get-go to be honest in the evaluations.
- It's binary. You either have it or you don't. The processes and tools are either present or they are not.
- If they are not, it does not mean the organization or department is a failure. It simply is an affirmation as to “why” you are using CMMI principles to build your framework.

# CMMI AT LIVANTA

- CMMI built a framework of processes for our IT department to create order out of chaos.
- While CompassWeb was already built and up and running, continued projects and IT development kept running into delays due to incongruent expectations, timelines, miscommunication and ultimately a lack of structure.
- When doing the Appraisal you need to pick multiple projects to demonstrate the tools and processes are truly implemented and practiced. Livanta used four different projects to demonstrate their capability, but strategically picked projects that had already been attempted and left incomplete.
- Applying this approach ultimately provided completion for the unfinished projects *and* a real sense of “proof” for the Appraisal Team that CMMI works.

# CMMI AT LIVANTA

- The use of the CMMI standards and procedures has provided consistency in the product output of the IT department.
- It has also increased the overall capability of the department and the organization as a whole, as there are expectations and a shared understanding of timeliness, feasibility and what is needed to complete projects.
- From a business standpoint, the CMMI standards and procedures also allows Livanta to quantify its work in the money spent on IT development and maintenance. Managing a federal contract requires every penny is quantified in a justifiable way. CMMI allows Livanta to do this to a much more detailed degree than before.

# CMMI AT LIVANTA

- The success of implementing CMMI at Livanta truly comes from the IT department and leadership of the company embracing the not just the principles of CMMI, but the reality that it requires a culture change.
- Livanta's IT department had to come to realize that CMMI was not just a process of completing paperwork to “cross some t’ and dot some i’s.” The key to the department understanding this was the communication from the Appraisal Team.
- The Appraisal Team serves not just as the experts assessing the implementation of CMMI, but as the cheerleaders, the communicators and as those who have the position and ability to allow CMMI to be a truly transformative set of tools and change.