

Strategic Planning in Action: Registry Software Change and Data Migration

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SUMMARY

Indiana State Cancer Registry's (ISCR's) growing case load prevented the state from meeting the national data standards set forth by CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR) in 2022 and 2023.

In April 2024, Indiana state government made a strategic investment in a new cancer registry database that provided more streamlined data management, case review, and follow-up with reporters. All state registry data were migrated from the old system to the new one by October 2024. Due to better auto-processing capabilities, Indiana's delayed cases dropped from 130,664 cases in August 2024 to 48,843 cases by January 2025. The state projects it will meet NPCR's national data standards in 2025. Indiana also adopted two other software solutions to meet its needs in case abstracting and data analysis.

CHALLENGE

- Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, ISCR accumulated a backlog in data processing of more than 130,000 cases by August 2024.
- ISCR used the registry database for more than two decades until July 2024, having established a trusted and valued relationship with the vendor—the University of Utah. Despite the software's reliability over many years, the severe staffing shortage at the registry, combined with mostly manual tasks (case edits) in this software, resulted in ISCR not meeting NPCR's data standards in 2022 and 2023.

SOLUTION

Indiana bought new software to help with the tremendous backlog of cases. ISCR has streamlined its abstracting, consolidation, quality control, death clearance, and other key functions to meet NPCR's data standards and be included in the United States Cancer Statistics.

RESULTS

- ISCR contracted with vendors in April 2024, and worked with the information technology vendor, oncology data specialist services vendor, and data reporters to ensure a smooth software and data transition before the 2024 NPCR data submission deadline.
- Due to the software's auto-processing capabilities, ISCR's backlog dropped from **130,664** cases in August 2024 to **48,843** cases by January 2025.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Next steps include:

- Reviewing standard operating procedures and plans based on redesigned processes.
- Completing the setup for each non-hospital reporter's electronic reporting mechanism to avoid paper reporting.
- Following up with delinquent non-reporting facilities to ensure data completeness and timeliness.