



# Top Five Contact Center Must-haves for a Successful Enrollment Period

This summer, both the Obama Administration and [Enroll America](#) will begin [aggressive campaigns](#)<sup>1</sup> to encourage eligible Americans to enroll in health coverage via the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) new online health insurance marketplaces. With less than 100 days until the start of the enrollment period, insurers must use this time to ensure their contact centers are prepared to offer members and prospects access to live agents with the correct policy and plan information, and answers for the multitude of questions that they will surely ask.

While the marketplaces will be new frontiers for managed care, contact centers with deep healthcare expertise, including previous reform and government start-up experience like Medicare Part D, are the most qualified to help individuals navigate the complexities of health insurance and purchase the right plan. Contact centers that meet the following five criteria will be optimized to deliver the best possible results during this enrollment period:

- 1. Agent training programs** – Comprehensive agent training programs and stringent quality assurance standards will be crucial for a successful enrollment period. Agents should be trained to perform across multiple platforms, coached to attentively listen to customers and empowered to help them make a decision.
- 2. Strong compliance background** – To best protect data safety and security, the contact center must employ a full range of physical and operational systems and networks. It should be knowledgeable about, and 100 percent dedicated to following, all local, state and federal laws and regulations under the ACA. A history of zero regulatory citations should serve as one of several important criteria for contact center selection.
- 3. Superior, integrated technology platforms** – The contact center needs to act as a natural extension of your company and your brand. Delivering a seamless experience necessitates that the contact center technologies, including CRM and management tools, be fully integrated with your in-house operations. This direct access to data will foster ease of use for the agents and quality interactions with your members.
- 4. Scalability** – The contact center should be able to nimbly ramp up or down when the marketplaces open, and deftly handle deviations from forecasted volume to ensure proper service levels and low hold times.
- 5. Quality reporting** – Reporting protocols should be set before the start of the enrollment period and employ a custom technology application, such as a dashboard that enables all authorized individuals to access and evaluate program performance data in real-time. Full transparency of performance data and analytical information enables accurate tracking of progress, and a rapid adjustment of program protocols, if necessary, to achieve business objectives.

The first-ever enrollment period under the ACA will be faced with challenges and the unexpected, so the best way to get off on the right foot will be through careful and detailed preparation. Now is the time for insurers to make sure they have the right contact center partner that is ready to go on October 1. Meeting the above checklist of criteria is a good place to start.

<sup>1</sup>The Wall Street Journal, 'Obamacare' Backers Ready Publicity Push, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2013/06/17/obamacare-backers-ready-publicity-push/>