



# CMS Secures Medical Data and Facilitates Partner Compliance



## A Growing Threat

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is responsible for safeguarding sensitive patient data, and also secures information exchanged between hundreds of partners at the federal and state level, as well as with universities and private businesses. As a result, there is zero tolerance for security breaches, and CMS must comply with ever-changing regulatory requirements.

CMS faces intense public pressure to maintain patient privacy and secure patient data, not only within its own environment, but when sharing data with external partners. As the rate of data exchange and the number of external partners continued to increase, CMS grew concerned about its exposure to potentially catastrophic data breaches and identified the critical need to enhance its data protection. In order to continue to meet the expectations of patients and government officials, CMS realized it needed to address support issues with partners who may not have had the expertise necessary to implement or manage advanced data security technology.

## Outdated Protection

While it has historically maintained an excellent record for data security, CMS's strategy had been focused on securing networks and devices, rather than sensitive data itself. The agency now recognized the need to implement data-level encryption that would protect health care recipients' personal information at rest and in motion, regardless of IT platform, point of origin, or destination.

The agency's move toward encryption was given further urgency by the need to maintain compliance with data protection standards mandated by federal laws, including the Federal Information Security Management Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

## Introduction

Find out how The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services uses PKWARE to protect its data and ensure secure data exchange with hundreds of partner organizations.

## About PKWARE

PKWARE offers the only data discovery and protection solution that locates and secures sensitive data to minimize organizational risks and costs, regardless of device or environment. Our ultra-efficient, scalable software is simple to use on a broad range of data types and repositories, enabling precise, automated visibility and control of personal data, even in the fastest-moving, most complex IT environments. With more than 1,200 customers, including many of the world's largest financial institutions, retailers, healthcare organizations, and government agencies, PKWARE continues to innovate as an award-winning global leader in data discovery, security, and compliance. To learn more, visit [PKWARE.com](http://PKWARE.com).

## PKWARE's Solution

Before selecting a data encryption solution, CMS developed an extensive list of capabilities that the solution would be required to provide:

- AES256 strong encryption
- Support for PKI certificates
- Complex password support
- Policy key management capabilities
- Support for all enterprise platforms and operating systems

In addition, it was critical that all of the agency's partners react favorably to the solution and adopt it into their daily processes.

An extensive evaluation process revealed that PKWARE was the only data encryption solution that could deliver persistent data-level protection while providing support for all of the platforms used by the agency's internal departments and external partners. CMS installed the PKWARE application on desktops, laptops, and mobile devices for more than 6,000 employees, in addition to implementing PKWARE protection for data exchange with more than 250 partner organizations.

As expected, PKWARE solution met every requirement defined by the agency and brought its data exchange procedures into compliance with all federal and industry guidelines for secure storage and exchange of sensitive health information.

## Looking ahead

In addition to making CMS's data exchange more secure, PKWARE has greatly improved data transfer times, as the solution uses PKWARE's industry-leading data compression technology to reduce file sizes before encryption. PKWARE is now an essential component of the agency's information collection and exchange procedures. CMS continues to increase its PKWARE install base and usage internally and with new business partners.

