



Case Study

In April 2006, the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics began implementing Noblis' RASMAS to help manage product recalls. RASMAS is a web-based service consisting of a repository of alerts for all products used in health care facilities, an integrated workflow to track and report successful remediation of these alerts, and an international user community with a particular interest in recall alert management within a hospital setting.

According to Alisa Schantz, RN, Iowa's clinical coordinator and recall manager for procurement services, Iowa's goal in implementing RASMAS was to reduce patient at-risk days and shorten the process time—originally as much as 20 days—to “close” a recall.

Another goal was to create a centralized document point. Managing the large but unmeasured volume of recalls Iowa received under its old decentralized system often resulted in confusion and misdirection—for instance, one recall letter for a surgical implant was sent to a physician who had left the hospital 2 years previously. After working with Noblis, Iowa's centralized database now has 248 responders, including 8 coordinators for their 15 product domains (e.g., biomedical devices, children's products, food, lab supplies).

Iowa went live with RASMAS in August 2006, and began processing an average of 216 recalls a month through the system (including the misdirected recall for the surgical implant). During the implementation phase, Noblis provided education and training for Iowa's staff, and worked to set up a centralized documentation system that can include anything in the hospital—from medical equipment to microwaves.

As a result of implementing RASMAS, Iowa's average closing time for the nearly 300 recalls it now receives monthly has gone from 10 days to just over 2. In part, this is because the centralized documentation system allows Iowa to receive recall notices anywhere from 1 day to 6 months sooner than notifications sent directly from the manufacturer.

One major benefit of RASMAS is that it is easy to find all the information about a particular recall—original documentation is kept on file and older alerts are always linked to the newest. This thorough documentation and rapid notification help the organization quickly identify delinquent areas and follow up on delays in response to recalls. Additional side benefits of the system include the ability to check on recalls on products being considered for purchase and to keep employees informed about recalls on items—such as food—that they may have in their homes.

For more information about RASMAS, contact Noblis at 877-727-6276 or via the web at <http://rasmus.noblis.org>.