



Harmony is key when consolidating complex retirement plans.

A large eastern U.S.-based healthcare network case study.



After merging three health systems, a large eastern U.S.-based health network saw an opportunity to consolidate retirement plans and create a best-in-class program for its team members.

This meant finding a partner who could bring together seven prior recordkeepers, 19 retirement plans and \$1.2 billion in combined assets—and do it fast so the new plans would be ready at the start of the year.

Out of the gate, leadership wanted team members to be able to maximize the matching benefit provided by the network. It was also important that the plans and communications were effectively harmonized so that all team members felt they belonged to one organization throughout the transition.

A solution focused on team member success

With a successful track record as one of the prior health system's retirement partners since 2011 during which time plan participation rates increased 167%—TIAA was chosen as sole recordkeeper for the combined network, presenting an engagement-driven solution that promised to:

- Harmonize as many benefits programs as possible and make them accessible to all team members
- Educate team members about coming changes so they felt knowledgeable and comfortable with the transition
- Evolve the resources available to team members in support of their long-term financial wellness

The network's plan included four new 401(k) plans, with subtle differences in plan design for different populations of employees, and two executive compensation plans. These were carefully balanced to provide all team members—but especially the more than 26,000 switching to TIAA for the first time—with options that represented the best of the prior plans.

How do you bring together 7 prior recordkeepers, 19 retirement plans and \$1.2 billion in combined assets?

Partnership benefits:



Achieved 93% plan participation within 60 days of launch.



Harmonized 19 retirement plans into 4 in less than 6 months.



Expanded services to support team member financial wellness.

TIAA also partnered with the network on a comprehensive multichannel communication and advice program that included on-site enrollment stations, easy-to-read transition guides for each plan, virtual counseling sessions and more. In fact, the communication strategy was so effective at engaging team members, it earned TIAA and the client a 2020 Pensions & Investments Eddy Award.

In addition, the program maximized inclusivity. For example, the enrollment stations at various care sites were operated day and night so that team members could access them regardless of their shift. Also, many of the resources were delivered in Spanish.

The more things change...

Despite the complexity of bringing these threads together in just a handful of months, TIAA was ready for enrollment to begin in mid- December. And for six days, it was a whirlwind of activity.

More than 15,000 team members proactively enrolled prior to the transition date, many in person with TIAA representatives on-site. This was a noteworthy response during an always busy end-of-year.

By February of the following year, the enrollment percentage had jumped from 49% to 93%, buoyed by an auto enroll feature that was activated after 30 days and continued engagement from the TIAA/network team.

Working with TIAA, the university took major steps to streamline its existing retirement plan programs. Among its achievements, the university:

- Merged 78 voluntary plans into one system-wide 403(b) plan and one system-wide 457(b) plan
- Consolidated the number of plan providers from 13 to 3, simplifying and tiering the investment menu
- Moved the governance of all plans to its system office
- Created an online participant portal for administrative ease

As part of this modernization effort, the university also worked with TIAA to develop a comprehensive multichannel participant education strategy, as well as a separate strategy for benefits practitioners across the system.

The university turned to TIAA to support participant education during the transition:

- Conducted 80 in-person seminars across 26 campuses
- Held 3,286 counseling sessions, representing 18% of targeted individuals
- 1,340 system-wide employees attended a group presentation

Time period was 1/1/2011 through 12/31/2019. Results experienced by the institution may not be typical of all plans. Individual results and investment value will vary.

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