imprivata®

Solve application Sign-On issues, increase efficiencies and improve staff productivity

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Warren Sundet, Information Security Officer, MeritCare Health System

Company

- 73 medical specialties at 2 hospitals and 39 clinics across ND and MN
- 7,188 employees
- Serves more than 2 million patients per year

Industry

- Healthcare

Applications

- GE Centricity EMR, Hyland OnBase

Challenges

- Security requirements delayed clinician access to data
- Password management
- Need to integrate multiple systems simultaneously

Results

- Secure, efficient access to patient data
- 50% reduction in application "wait time"
- Satisfied HIPAA and SOX requirements

Introduction

MeritCare Health System—headquartered in Fargo, North Dakota—operates the largest group practice and hospital in the state. The organization's medical staff provides expertise in 73 medical specialties at two hospital campuses and 39 remote clinics across North Dakota and Minnesota. As the state's largest private employer, MeritCare employs 7,188 individuals who serve more than two million patients per year.

The business challenge

MeritCare's staff needed to access multiple applications as they saw patients. Doctors and nurses were challenged trying to remember login credentials for up to eight applications and resorted to writing down usernames and passwords. When staff members lost their credentials, they would call the helpdesk for a password reset, which could take up to four minutes. The number of lockouts and login delays grew, resulting in lower productivity, increased security risks, extra burden on support staff, and much user frustration.

In response, MeritCare decided to implement a single sign-on (SSO) solution to coincide with a portal deployment that was underway. "We had already chosen the Siemens Soarian Clinician Portal and Fusion context management from Carefx to provide physicians and nurses with access to aggregated patient data—pulled from multiple disparate applications—in a single user interface. The single sign-on component was imperative in providing the access efficiencies and security," explained Warren Sundet, MeritCare's information security officer.

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>
> - Warren Sundet

In considering different SSO vendors, the script-driven nature of the majority of products did not meet MeritCare's requirements. "We wanted an SSO solution that was easy to implement and maintain, and could seamlessly integrate with the portal environment and MeritCare's other applications, such as GE Centricity EMR and Hyland OnBase," said Sundet. MeritCare also needed a platform that would easily integrate with their existing badge scan system for medication and administrative checking.

The Imprivata OneSign solution

After evaluating a number of solutions, MeritCare chose Imprivata OneSign®. "Imprivata was head and shoulders above the rest. The appliance interacts seamlessly with other applications and systems, resulting in much smoother operations and a more user-friendly environment for the MeritCare employees in charge of SSO," explained Sundet.

In addition, MeritCare was pleased with the appliance's range of functionality. "The appliance offers true one-stop shopping and embodies the new technology around SSO, helping us keep our edge as a 100 Most Wired hospital. Not only does Imprivata OneSign satisfy our immediate SSO needs, but we can easily tap into support for additional strong authentication and integrated physical and logical security in the future," continued Sundet.

Before imprivata OneSign

- Care providers were delayed accessing patient information at shared workstations because of complex security requirements
- Efforts to comply with HIPAA mandates caused password management problems
- Needed to integrate multiple systems—existing Siemens clinician portal, context management, and single sign-on—all at the same time

After imprivata OneSign

- Single sign-on and context management provide physicians and nurses with secure, efficient access to patient data
- Fast user switching enables a 50% reduction in application "wait time" for doctors and nurses to access critical patient information
- Strong access management policy satisfies HIPAA and SOX requirements

The results

With the help of VIOPOINT—an Imprivata partner specializing in healthcare systems integration—MeritCare SSO-enabled its eight key applications and systems in four days. "Integrating three products from three different vendors is always difficult. But Imprivata OneSign worked as advertised, with no problems at any time. Together VIOPOINT and Imprivata provided outstanding expertise and support," said Sundet.

MeritCare's physicians and nurses are using Imprivata OneSign to quickly and easily access a variety of applications. Through the new Siemens portal, they can now gain access to patient data in a single view, including an in-house program that reconciles patient medication information maintained in different systems and displays it in a consolidated dashboard view. With Imprivata OneSign, staff can log in to these critical applications five to ten times faster than before. "Doctors and nurses are thrilled that they can work so much more efficiently," explained Sundet.

The solution also supports the mobile nature of MeritCare's staff. Previously, as doctors and nurses logged in to and out of shared desktops in patient rooms, they often had to wait for access to needed screens and patient information. "Now with the tier-one login enabled by Imprivata OneSign, they can take advantage of fast user switching. In fact, the wait time has been cut by more than 50%," continued Sundet.

Furthermore, Imprivata OneSign helps MeritCare comply with internal policies and regulatory mandates. Because Imprivata OneSign provides a standardized method of access control and built-in monitoring and reporting capabilities, the organization can enforce its robust access management policy to satisfy both HIPAA and Sarbanes-Oxley requirements and be prepared for regularly imposed compliance audits.

MeritCare is in the midst of introducing the SSO-enabled portal to more than 2,400 physicians and nurses, and will provide Imprivata OneSign SSO capabilities to most of MeritCare Health Systems' 7,000 employees. "Making our providers more efficient is a top priority—after all, they are the ones who generate revenue. Imprivata OneSign allows them to spend more time with patients. These efficiencies, along with offering the most advanced technology and systems, such as Imprivata OneSign SSO, help us recruit and retain the best staff around," stated Sundet.

Additionally, "Imprivata helps MeritCare get closer to realizing our vision of moving more and more to a total role-based environment. We have made great strides in this area with our integrated Siemens, Carefx, Imprivata solution rollout," concluded Sundet.

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About Imprivata
Imprivata, the healthcare IT security company, enables healthcare securely by establishing trust between people, technology, and information to address critical compliance and security challenges while improving productivity and the patient experience.

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