

# REDUCE EMR IMPLEMENTATION HEADACHES

## 6 Common Challenges and How to Overcome Them

The migration to Electronic Medical Records was supposed to make life easier for medical practices, but in many cases it's done just the opposite. Now, practices are forced to find ways to address the unintended consequences.

For those who have first-hand experience, the challenges are familiar: legacy hardware and software systems never designed to handle large volumes of data; lengthy and unreliable backup and recovery; and questions about HIPAA compliance, to name a few.

Fortunately, there are solutions that can help solve these challenges seamlessly. For example, the cloud storage services provided by eTegrity Systems International are comprehensive and HIPAA compliant, among other benefits.

This white paper examines the challenges faced by small and mid-sized healthcare providers and explains how the eTegrity solution helps solve them.

### CHALLENGE #1:

## Exponential Data Growth

One of the primary concerns when implementing new IT systems and methods is ensuring that the system can grow with the company.

Often, with small to mid-sized operations, the growth or expansion of the company can present challenges to the IT department that result in ad hoc systems being reworked to fit the company's new needs. Those needs often end up outpacing the capacity of these systems, resulting in the need to implement a new system.

This is often time consuming and can result in a disruption to patient care during the transitional phase of implementation. It behooves companies to embrace systems and methods that are capable of growing with the company and have little to no disruption throughout the growth process.

### CHALLENGE #2:

## Data Backup and Recovery

In situations where data is backed up physically at the practice location – not fully tied into the network but backed up via disc or tape – instances of data loss can be extremely disruptive to everyday operations.

When data is lost and then must be looked for through a complex and inefficient storage system, that can seriously impede the speed of patient care. Accidents happen, and data gets deleted or misplaced, and the more resilient a system is to this type incident, the better off a company is when a data loss event occurs.

### CHALLENGE #3:

## Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

Disasters can take many forms – for example, earthquake, fire, flood, hackers, computer viruses, power surges, power outages. All of these can cause extreme disruption to the continuity of data access, often in moments when access to data is the most critical.

Some data backup and storage systems are more resilient to these types of events than others. In the event of a loss of large amounts of critical data, it is important to have a system in place that allows for fast, efficient access to the backups of this critical data. Physical backups of data on site may also be compromised by some of these disaster events. Therefore, other, more resilient solutions must be considered, if business continuity is to be guaranteed.

### CHALLENGE #4:

## The Backup Administration Complexity Issue

A problem with many data backup storage procedures is the complex administrative challenges facing small institutions.

- Who is responsible for backing up, maintaining and securing data?
- What are the protocols?
- What contingency plans are in place to ensure continuity in the transfer of responsibilities during staffing transitions?
- What accountability measures exist to ensure that data is safely and regularly backed up and stored?

A modern, streamlined, well defined system can make all the difference when addressing these issues. This gives administration the peace of mind not available within systems more prone to negative effects from human error.

### CHALLENGE #5:

## Data Security

Another challenge for small to mid-sized healthcare institutions is security. How much security is enough? How are smaller institutions able to meet the stringent HIPAA security requirements? Some answers to these questions can be quite costly, especially when trying to strike a balance between the security and ready availability of backup data.

New solutions find ways to offset the cost of high levels of security while still providing the strongest, most cutting edge security available in the market. Smaller institutions without the budget or capacity for such security measures can benefit greatly from a comprehensive solution.

### CHALLENGE #6:

## Cost

The cost of upgrading IT systems, even just for the backup and storage of critical data, can be quite prohibitive for small to mid-sized healthcare providers. Server upgrades, offsite data storage options, and additional IT and security staff are just some of the possible costs associated with HIPAA compliance.

Developing and tweaking a system to be resilient to all of the challenges listed above can be disruptive to daily operations and patient care, and one mistake or oversight can have extremely negative results. This makes it even more important for healthcare providers to be aware of any and all available technology that exists to make their systems more resilient in a cost-effective, streamlined manner.



# The eTegrity Solution

eTegrity offers a comprehensive cloud-based data backup and recovery solution that meets these challenges head on.

eTegrity has identified many of the challenges presented by the HIPAA regulations in regard to the backup, storage and security of electronic data in the modernization of healthcare record keeping, and it's developed a comprehensive solution targeted at small to mid-sized private practices and hospitals. These institutions are the most affected by the increased regulations and the transition required to remain in compliance.

The eTegrity cloud storage solution is devoted to meeting the needs of these healthcare institutions and helping them go above and beyond, anticipating further changes and adjustments that will no doubt be necessary down the road.

Below is a detailed account of how eTegrity solves each of the challenges faced by healthcare institutions in a cost-effective manner with little to no disruption of daily operations in a short, streamlined period of implementation.

## **BENEFIT #1:**

### **A Service That Grows With Your Needs**

One of the most obvious benefits of eTegrity cloud storage is its ability to grow with the needs of clients. With multi-tiered backup options available, each level of data can be stored and secured in a fashion consistent with its value.

This level of customization allows healthcare institutions to purchase exactly the level of service suitable to current needs, with multiple growth options remaining readily available for the moment they become necessary.

## **BENEFIT #2:**

### **Significantly Faster Data Recovery**

Many healthcare institutions use clunky data backup and storage methods, backing up critical information via disc or tape drives. While this serves the primary function of backing up critical data, accessibility and data restore functions are a great deal slower than with cloud storage.

Even the most streamlined storage system using tape or disc cannot compete with the speed, accessibility and security of cloud storage. The only way for a tape or disc system to be readily available is for the discs or tape to be stored on-site, which does not protect against many possible data destruction events.

If data stored in this manner is kept off site, then the accessibility and speed of data recovery is also significantly diminished. Thus cloud storage is one of the premier options available for small to mid-sized healthcare providers when considering a data backup and storage system.

## **BENEFIT #3:**

### **HIPAA-Compliant Security Measures Ensure Business Continuity**

Data stored off-site in cloud storage is safe from many of the disasters, both natural and human-caused that can result in loss or compromise of critical data.

The nature of off-site storage protects the data from physical disasters including fire, flood, storm, power surge or outage, and breaking and entering. The data, which is also encrypted and heavily password-protected, is also protected in case of a network intrusion event.

The data center itself is protected by security measures including 24/7 physical security and video surveillance, key card access, facial bone scan, and fingerprint access. The secure data storage facility is SAS-70 type II and SSAE-16 audited with FIPS 140-2 certified encryption algorithms, making it compliant with HIPAA and SOX standards.

eTegrity is a HIPAA compliant Business Associate having undergone a 3rd party audit enforcing the 3 major safeguards dictated by HIPAA & HiTech law. These standards mean that the data is safe, secure and accessible 24/7 regardless of disasters of either a malicious or natural origin that may affect your practice.

#### **BENEFIT #4:**

### **Off-Site Data Storage is More Resilient**

Cloud storage with this level of resilience and security will make your entire system more resilient in any case of data loss, providing peace of mind for the administration in any situation.

The system provided by eTegrity ensures the continuity and integrity of any and all files or folders the client selects to back up and/or store, as well as Sybase, MS SQL and MySQL databases, XenApps and Exchange.

Another distinguishing feature that sets eTegrity apart from many other cloud storage providers is that there is no time limit on the age of stored data. You can store your data for as long as you need to, regardless of whether or not you need to access it regularly. That serves the unique needs of the healthcare industry which must often keep certain records even up to six years after the death of a client.

#### **BENEFIT #5:**

### **Streamlined Backup Administration**

The system used by eTegrity also provides for natural, streamlined client-side administration of backup procedures and protocols.

Different levels of access and areas of responsibility can be assigned to various members of staff, allowing for real-time accountability including real-time reports and email notifications confirming successful backups.

This is yet another factor that contributes to the peace of mind of staff as they can always be assured that data is safely recorded and secured in real time.

#### **BENEFIT #6:**

### **The eTegrity Cloud is Cost Effective**

The eTegrity solution is cost effective, and implementation is painless and fast, meaning little to no disruption of daily activities and no negative implications to patient care. With eTegrity, institutions can upgrade their data backup and storage system without significant investments in expensive hardware and software upgrades.

## **CONCLUSION**

eTegrity has distinguished itself as a leader in the field of cloud storage for the healthcare industry. Its innovations and devotion to high-quality service make it an exceptional choice for secure data backup and storage. The painless implementation of the new system, combined with eTegrity's unique understanding of the needs of healthcare providers, mean that you will be working with a partner focused on providing you with the services necessary for the success of your hospital or practice.

visit [www.etegrity.com](http://www.etegrity.com) for more information

