

# Curing IT Woes: Overcoming Healthcare's Three Biggest IT Issues

---

## Article Reprint

GroupWise  
ZENworks Configuration Management

# Overcoming Healthcare's Three Biggest IT Issues

Gone are the days when physicians had to memorize 1,200 page textbooks to diagnose patients, but gone too are the policies that allowed nurses to easily access patient data without authorization.

---

**According to CDW's Winter Health Tech Report of 2013<sup>1</sup>, the ability "to store, organize, analyze and access hundreds of millions of medical records" can not only reduce operational costs but also, "boost service levels, streamline application deployment and integrate multiple technologies."**

**Technology has made patient care more intuitive and successful, but it has also given the IT department a persistent headache that can't be fixed with a doctor's prescription. Here are three of healthcare's biggest IT concerns and how healthcare organizations are solving them.**

## Keeping Data Secure without Limiting Access

Meeting the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is no easy task for IT. Since the introduction of HIPAA, healthcare IT departments have been working furiously to ensure that private information remains private, while ensuring the network is properly configured, data is backed up and—most importantly—they can demonstrate that the organization is adhering to federal requirements.

Identity and access management solutions play the largest role in keeping data secure through requiring proper authorization to access information. Yet the struggle of allowing access to data while keeping that data secure extends to every facet of an IT infrastructure.

- 
- 1 [http://webojects.cdw.com/webojects/docs/PageTurner/HealthTech/index.html?cm\\_re=PromoSpot2\\_-\\_Industry+View\\_-\\_HIT+Page+Turner](http://webojects.cdw.com/webojects/docs/PageTurner/HealthTech/index.html?cm_re=PromoSpot2_-_Industry+View_-_HIT+Page+Turner)
  - 2 [www.novell.com/success/stories/bjc-healthcare-information-services.html](http://www.novell.com/success/stories/bjc-healthcare-information-services.html)
  - 3 [www.novell.com/success/wyoming\\_medical\\_center.html](http://www.novell.com/success/wyoming_medical_center.html)

BJC HealthCare Information Services, a company that works closely with Washington University School of Medicine and runs several academic medical centers, faced the challenge of maintaining secure email while collaborating with email systems outside of BJC's control. With the amount of healthcare information that can flow over email, this can be a big issue for all healthcare organizations. Using a coexistence solution, BJC was able to ensure that its electronic protected health information (ePHI) remained safe long-term. "Because the GroupWise® database is internally encrypted, no one outside the system can read our email," said operations manager Charlie Yarnall<sup>2</sup>. "This means ePHI is secure, as required by healthcare regulations."

## Addressing Application Growing Pains

Healthcare organizations are dealing with more and more applications. Doctors use knowledge databases and online reference tools to quickly diagnose patients, pharmacists handle prescriptions electronically, technicians archive vital medical scans in various databases, and administrators use multiple scheduling and timesheet programs.

On top of this, CDW reported that the number of clinicians who use smartphones, tablets and desktops will climb to 82 percent in the next year. This means IT departments have to manage many applications on many different platforms.

When Wyoming Medical Center's IT department saw its four software applications rise to an astonishing 135 and its manual workstations reach 800, it knew it was in trouble. "It's critical for our care givers to access applications as fast as possible," said Rob Pettigrew<sup>3</sup>, Wyoming Medical Center's manager of technical systems and help desk, "This means we need to ensure our workstations are up-to-date and properly patched. With so many different applications running, this was a real challenge."

---

Wyoming Medical Center turned to Micro Focus® ZENworks® Configuration Management, as did Kent and Medway Health Informatics Service. With a user base of over 30,000 individuals, Kent and Medway was looking to automate much of its application work. As applications proliferate, this is an important step for any healthcare IT department. Debbie Hawkes<sup>4</sup>, operations director at Kent and Medway, said, “Novell (now part of Micro Focus) ZENworks Configuration Management really came into its own when the deadline for installing a time-critical NHS national application was brought forward at the last minute. With the Novell solution we were able to roll out the application overnight without breaking a sweat—something which simply would not have been possible before.”

### Maintaining Reliability

How many patients can afford to wait days, even weeks, for their lab results to be picked up from a discharge pile because no doctor was notified that the tests were complete? How effectively can an emergency responder treat a victim if that patient's files aren't loading onto the ambulance computer?

With more and more systems becoming dependent on wireless transfers of data, computer-based protocols and electronic reports, it has become critical that healthcare IT departments keep IT infrastructure running at all times. As Eppe Wolfis<sup>5</sup>, IT manager at Lentis healthcare, explains, “It is vital for us to ensure that all of our systems are kept up and running efficiently, in order to ensure that our staff have access to the information they need. If a doctor or nurse cannot retrieve patient information quickly, then it could potentially jeopardize the care that they provide.”

Maintaining a reliable IT environment often means choosing your vendors for their dependability and enterprise experience. Though many

---

4 [www.novell.com/success/stories/kent-and-medway.html](http://www.novell.com/success/stories/kent-and-medway.html)

5 [www.novell.com/success/stories/lentis.html](http://www.novell.com/success/stories/lentis.html)

6 <http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2013/03/epic-uptime-achievement-can-you-beat-16-years/>

7 [www.novell.com/success/stories/arkin.html](http://www.novell.com/success/stories/arkin.html)

mobile-focused companies offer exciting options today, few can offer 16 years of uptime<sup>6</sup> or even around-the-clock support. At Arkin, one of the largest mental healthcare institutions in the Netherlands, IT manager Aart van de Beek<sup>7</sup> has found that “Novell (now part of Micro Focus) products have always delivered very high levels of reliability and scalability at an extremely competitive price. With Novell solutions supporting standardized, streamlined management,” Beek continues, “... we will be able to guarantee that Arkin continues to offer top-quality patient care in the future.”

When a growing number of applications and an increased need for reliable technologies are stacked on top of mandatory HIPAA regulations, it's no surprise that healthcare IT employees are constantly fighting to cure their headaches. However, IT relief can't be found through a prescription—it is achieved when the department is able to balance responsibility and user support. Healthcare organizations require proven, effective products that allow clinicians to work faster and smarter, and in doing so, deliver the best possible patient outcomes.

---

**“Novell (now part of Micro Focus) products have always delivered very high levels of reliability and scalability at an extremely competitive price.”**

#### AART VAN DE BEEK

IT Manager  
Arkin

#### About Micro Focus

Since 1976, Micro Focus has helped more than 20,000 customers unlock the value of their business logic by creating enabling solutions that bridge the gap from well-established technologies to modern functionality. The two portfolios work to a single, clear vision—to deliver innovative products supported by exceptional customer service. [www.microfocus.com](http://www.microfocus.com)



**Micro Focus**  
**UK Headquarters**  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 1635 565200

**U.S. Headquarters**  
Provo, Utah  
801 861 4272  
888 321 4272

Additional contact information and office locations:  
[www.novell.com](http://www.novell.com)