Protecting patient data with a streamlined solution

Southern Oregon Orthopedics implemented Dell Data Protection | Encryption to secure medical records and comply with HIPAA/HITECH regulations

Business need

Southern Oregon Orthopedics needed a simple solution that could safeguard patient data while also providing the ability to easily demonstrate compliance with state and federal regulations.

Solution

The surgery group chose to implement Dell Data Protection | Enterprise Edition to encrypt data stored on laptops and tablets used by the medical staff.

Benefits

- Flexible deployment on laptops and tablets
- Meets HIPAA and HITECH regulations
- Easy reporting to demonstrate compliance
- Fast and simple implementation
- Completely transparent to the end user
- Seamless integration with existing hardware
- Scalable for future growth

Solutions at a glance

- Data Protection

"It was simple to implement and in the end, Dell Data Protection | Encryption gave us the result we were looking for."

Jeremy Nugent, IT Director, Southern Oregon Orthopedics

Southern Oregon Orthopedics is southern Oregon's largest orthopedic surgery group. Its physicians perform more than 3,800 operations each year for injuries and illnesses that affect the spine, shoulders, knees, feet, ankles, hips, wrists and hands.

Due to the nature of care it provides, Southern Oregon Orthopedics has a large and expanding patient base. The medical staff is constantly handling sensitive patient personal data, including health records and financial information.

Aiming to gain efficiencies and adopt electronic records more widely, the medical team began to access more data on laptops and tablets making data encryption an immediate priority.

HIPAA and HITECH add another level of complexity

Medical organizations like Southern Oregon Orthopedics are required to comply with federal HIPAA and HITECH regulations. Encryption is a key part of a HIPAA-compliant security solution, involving constant monitoring and regular assessments. In addition, organizations must generate and archive audit trails that provide critical information such as who accessed what data, where, how and when.

Compliance is especially challenging where mobile devices are involved. Medical professionals often use their own PCs, laptops and mobile devices to communicate across unsecured networks without encryption or other safeguards. Along with the possible theft or accidental loss of data from these devices, networks can be vulnerable to attacks and malicious activities by hackers, third-party service providers, technology vendors or healthcare employees.

Southern Oregon Orthopedics is no exception. Its physicians regularly access patient data remotely and sometimes even on personal devices. The group needed an encryption solution that could ensure compliance without

bogging down its processes and frustrating users.

Discovering a solution in Dell Data Protection | Encryption

Jeremy Nugent, IT director for Southern Oregon Orthopedics, was charged with protecting the surgical group's data and ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations. There was an existing system in place, but it required a long, laborious process to manage and demonstrate compliance. End users were frustrated by the need to enter a complicated password before they could log on to their devices.

Nugent knew he had to find a better solution, for himself and for the medical team he supported. When they began their search, they immediately turned to Dell. Because they already had Dell systems in place, adding Dell Data Protection | Encryption (DDP | E) was a natural fit.

Making the case for data encryption

Nugent knew the cost of a lost laptop or tablet would greatly exceed the price to replace the device. The valuable data it held could lead to extensive costs to determine the extent of data loss exposure and who should be notified in the event of a data loss. In addition, they had to consider the potential costs of lost patient confidence.

Products & Services

Software

Dell Data Protection | Encryption

He met with other key decision makers and drew attention to known security gaps and made a convincing case for DDP | E. Ultimately, they chose to implement DDP | E on 25 devices, consisting of both laptops and tablets.

Fast, simple implementation

Once Nugent had approval to implement DDP | E, the Dell team walked him through every step of the process. In just four hours, they covered how to download and install DDP | E on the existing servers, how to roll out the solution to their devices, and how to configure policies for their specific requirements. He also learned how to run reports to demonstrate compliance.

In no time at all, Nugent had DDP | E up and running and for the first time was able to get a big-picture view of the encryption status for all of his devices at once because of the DDP | E management console. In Nugent's own words, "It was simple to implement and in the end, Dell Data Protection | Encryption gave us the result we were looking for."

Reaping the benefits of DDP | E

Now that Southern Oregon Orthopedics has DDP | E in place, the IT team spends much less time deploying and documenting their encryption. They created a group policy, which allows them to automatically roll out the appropriate encryption to any devices added to the group. And end users are happier because the solution is completely transparent — they no longer have to take any action to ensure data is protected.

As Southern Oregon Orthopedics continues to grow and find ways to provide more efficient care for its patients, Nugent is happy knowing that DDP | E offers a highly scalable solution that can grow with the organization. It can protect not just its laptops and tablets, but also external media like USBs, CDs and DVDs.

Thanks to DDP | E, Southern Oregon Orthopedics has a clear view of its encryption policies across the entire organization. And more importantly, the team knows that should the unthinkable happen, their data is protected. And that makes everyone rest easier.

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