

ValleyCare Health System Streamlines Workflows with Fast and Secure Access to Siemens MedSeries4 and Other Applications



INTRODUCTION

Since 1961, ValleyCare Health System has provided state-of-the-art, top quality health care to families in the Livermore and Pleasanton, California area. As a locally-owned, not-for-profit health system, ValleyCare reinvests any profit it makes into the organization for new technology, facilities, and services. ValleyCare has a total of 242 beds and 1400 employees, including a medical staff of more than 300, who provide a wide array of world-class inpatient and outpatient services.



THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

When ValleyCare made the strategic decision to outsource IT operations to Siemens Healthcare, it was the first step in a process that would ultimately upgrade or replace nearly every IT system in use. The new systems included laboratory, radiology, and pharmacy systems as well as decision support, clinical documentation, admissions, discharges, patient accounting, accounts receivable and more. In compliance with HIPAA requirements, users were assigned a unique username and password for each system. Remembering multiple complex passwords for different applications put a strain on the staff as well as the helpdesk, which was fielding an average of 250 password reset requests monthly.

“As we deployed more and more of these systems it became clear that managing multiple passwords and dealing with multiple network and application sign-on was a burden, especially for our clinicians,” says Bob Woods, Siemens Site Executive at ValleyCare. In addition to streamlining application access, ValleyCare was looking for a solution that would support stronger and more varied forms of authentication (including RFID badges) and that would facilitate compliance reporting as a new Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system was brought online.

THE IMPRIVATA ONESIGN SOLUTION

Technology Services consultants from Siemens Healthcare introduced Imprivata’s OneSign product as a tool that could more than handle the multiple network and system sign on, as well as strong authentication needs, and brought in Imprivata to perform an on-site demonstration and evaluation of the solution. Woods recalls, “Imprivata brought in the fully configured OneSign appliance full-blown server, connected it to our networks, and helped us simply and quickly build profiles and set up policies. After that there was no question that Imprivata OneSign would work well in our environment, because we could see it and we could use it ourselves.”

Following the evaluation, the Siemens consultants analyzed ValleyCare’s network, application mix and user needs and developed an implementation plan to deploy three Imprivata OneSign appliances: one in production, another for backup, and the third for testing.

The Siemens consultants and Woods met with a group of representatives from each department at ValleyCare who meet monthly to discuss IT issues. They worked with this group to recruit super users and to plan the roll-out, including which applications would be profiled first, what policies were needed, and the order in which departments would begin using SSO with Strong Authentication. The roll-out started with non-clinical departments, including finance, payroll, and human resources.

COMPANY

- Founded in 1961
- 1400 employees
- 240 beds

INDUSTRY:

- Healthcare

APPLICATIONS

- Siemens MedSeries4, Lawson, Signo

CHALLENGES

- Alleviate password headaches from managing multiple complex passwords
- Needed to reduce password reset requests
- Needed to simplify EMR adoption

RESULTS

- Helpdesk calls significantly reduced
- Streamlined secure access to applications
- Compliance and audit requirements met
- Improved patient information security

BEFORE IMPRIVATA ONESIGN	AFTER IMPRIVATA ONESIGN
250 password reset requests to helpdesk per month	Significantly cut helpdesk calls
Employees were required to remember 10-12 unique passwords	Staff have streamlined access to more than a dozen applications through single sign-on
Planned EMR adoption was at risk because security requirements would slow clinical workflows	EMR applications can be profiled and deployed as single-sign on applications, providing secure, seamless access to staff via their existing username and password

After a successful first phase of deployment, roll-outs were scheduled for ancillary clinical departments, nursing areas, and finally physicians. ValleyCare profiled 15 applications for the initial roll-out, and 30 to 40 applications will ultimately be profiled.

ValleyCare defined three security policies—one for non-clinical workflows, one for the nursing station area, and one for computers in patient rooms. When a nurse or other clinician enters a patient room, they swipe their badge to log in and use any applications they need. When they log out, the applications close immediately so they can move to the next room quickly.

THE RESULTS

With the partnership of Imprivata OneSign, Siemens Healthcare, and ValleyCare, staff no longer have to keep track of a dozen or more complex passwords; instead they can use a single username and password (or RFID badge) to access all applications for which they are authorized. As a result, Woods expects password reset requests to the helpdesk to be cut by at least 50 percent.

The full four-month roll-out progressed smoothly, and 50 percent of ValleyCare staff were enjoying streamlined application access in just two months. “Deploying an appliance-based SSO solution has been a tremendous advantage,” notes Ivan Cheung, Siemens Senior Systems Analyst at ValleyCare. “We have one system at each of our two campuses for redundancy and disaster recovery.”

From the start, the deployment was recognized as a success across all groups at ValleyCare. “When we initially demonstrated Imprivata OneSign to physicians and clinicians, their feedback was very positive,” says Woods. “Then, the non-clinical staff really embraced it as we rolled it out to them first. Once the nursing staff saw that it was enhancement to their workflow—and not an additional burden—their response was positive as well. And certainly our compliance officer is happy that we’ve implemented a system that provides a simple way to comply with audit and security requirements.”

The progress to date has positioned ValleyCare well to accelerate EMR adoption. “Single sign-on will be part of each new system we implement going forward,” notes Woods. “And with Imprivata OneSign the security and compliance we need will be transparent to our users.”

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*—Ivan Chung
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