

CASE STUDY

Freeman Health System enables fast, efficient authentications and easy, secure third-party access

A large Missouri health system partners with Imprivata to implement a secure digital identity management solution that pleases staff, vendors, and cyber insurance providers alike



LOCATION
Joplin, MO

INDUSTRY
Healthcare

ABOUT

3 acute care facilities, 70+ clinic locations with 5,000+ employees over a 60-mile circle serving a population of 500,000 over a four-state area

Challenges

- Implement strict security protocols to conform to cyber insurance provider standards
- Enable an effective, efficient authentication process for staff members
- Identify a fast, reliable method for facilitating, administering, and monitoring vendor system access

Solutions

- Imprivata Enterprise Access Management provided badge-tap access and multifactor authentication while enhancing compatibility and compliance
- Imprivata Enterprise Access Management allowed the organization to validate and connect staff in a way that complied with cyber insurance provider requirements
- Imprivata Vendor Privileged Access Management allowed for fast access for vendors, providing oversight into actions they take on the network
- Imprivata Patient Privacy Intelligence enabled system wide security audits, reducing the time required to monitor privacy breaches, protect patient privacy, and conduct internal investigations

Results

- Implemented digital identity solutions that facilitated quick and easy access to all clinical systems as well as paving the way for an organizational-wide deployment of virtual desktops
- Saved up to 7,000 hours of clinical time monthly
- Cut the average user login time by 18 seconds
- Created more secure systems that satisfied insurance provider requirements

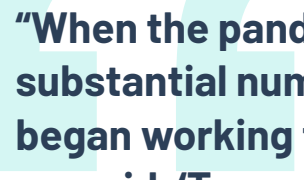
On January 11, 2023, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) underwent a two-day system outage after contractors unintentionally deleted a selection of its alert system files. This impacted international travel, revenues, and confidence levels in the entire air travel industry. Clearly, not all organizations would survive and quickly rebound in a situation like that. But some can.

Freeman Health System mitigated this concern by deploying a secure vendor access system that provided structured secure access to the vendors' applications.

Freeman Health System is a network of hospitals and medical facilities located in the surrounding Joplin, Missouri area. With a massive population to care for and a sprawling staff to provide care, the organization was looking to enable staff and vendor efficiency without forsaking security, and also needed a way to satisfy the requirements of their cybersecurity insurance provider. What Freeman needed was a digital identity management suite.

As a healthcare provider, Freeman Health System always aims to evolve its business through digital transformation, while still prioritizing both security and efficiency. Exploring potential opportunities to reimagine, simplify, and speed up workflows empowers its employees and partners, and can lead to new capabilities as well as more time and freedom to focus on more fulfilling and purpose-driven work.

Expanding Freeman Health's use of quick and easy access (while optimizing security) is keeping the organization on track to achieve its ambitious plans for internal digital transformation. Here's how Freeman Health accomplished that.



“When the pandemic hit, and a substantial number of people began working from home, we said, ‘Turn on multifactor authentication for those users.’ And it was that simple. And we’ve seen multiple occasions where we’ve done that with Imprivata. The solutions just did their job. That’s what you want, to turn it on and let people start using it. That’s been our experience with Imprivata.”

– Skip Rollins, Chief Information Officer,
Freeman Health System

Challenge: Meet stringent cybersecurity insurance provider requirements, quickly authenticate staff members, and maintain awareness of vendor activity

Like any health system, Freeman Health has a large network of systems, devices, and applications it needs to grant access to. This is necessary for the clinicians, nurses, and other staff to deliver care, communicate, and collaborate effectively. On top of that, they also have other individuals they need to onboard and offboard into their systems like vendors, outside clinicians, and partner organizations with whom the organization shares data.



Managing these numerous digital identities is challenging because Freeman Health needs the ability to maintain varying levels of access and oversight to individuals depending on their role.

“Digital identity can get complicated for us because it has many layers,” said Skip Rollins, Chief Information Officer at Freeman. “And part of it is because our environment is so difficult to look across when it comes to a single identity.”

On top of that need to allow for smooth clinician, staff, and vendor workflows, Freeman Health also needed to fulfill requirements set forth by its cyber insurance provider. Data breaches and other cyber threats represent a huge risk for healthcare delivery organizations, so cyber insurance is a necessity. The problem is that cyber insurance providers then demand organizations meet certain conditions to qualify for coverage.

“This means organizations need a full cyber incident response playbook,” said Rollins. “The requirements insurers put on us talk about how we would respond, who we would call, and the time limits around that before we must contact the insurance company. When you’re experiencing an incident where your systems and databases are locked up, that’s not a good time to make critical decisions.”

So how did Freeman Health identify and apply digital identity solutions that addressed all these needs?

Solution: Implement solutions that maximize cyber insurance compliance, usability, and security

Freeman Health leveraged its longstanding partnership with Imprivata to enhance its overall digital identity management approach.

With Imprivata Vendor Privileged Access Management, the organization established a method for connecting users to its environment in a way that felt safe. “It asked them questions like, ‘Why are you getting on our system?’ ‘Who are you?’ ‘What organization do you work for?’” said Rollins. “We could validate who they are and why they’re connecting to our environment, which is something we do every day now.” Freeman Health also used Imprivata Patient Privacy Intelligence for its security audits, reducing the time required to monitor privacy breaches and conduct internal investigations.

Building this holistic environmental awareness is a critical resource when it comes to building a cyber incident response plan insurance providers will find suitable. “Imprivata Vendor Privileged Access Management helps you understand who’s been on your environment, what they’re doing, and what changes they’re making,” added Rollins.

In terms of getting access for qualified users, Imprivata Enterprise Access Management delivered fast badge-tap access and streamlined multifactor authentication. “What we found out quickly is we’re saving anywhere from 7,000 to 9,000 hours of clinical time every month by not having people waste time logging in and out,” said Rollins, adding, “They offer tools that run all day, every day. It grinds along and manages all those sign-ins. It’s a very, very low maintenance set of tools.”

These solutions also improved Freeman Health’s processes for handling vendors and other external partners requiring access. “Imprivata provides that multifactor authentication for every single person that connects to our environment if they’re not physically on our campus,” said Rollins. Freeman Health uses traveling physicians and nurses to support its workforce; with this suite of solutions, they can onboard and offboard these individuals easily.

Freeman Health had one situation with a vendor in which this suite of security solutions helped make a challenging situation more manageable. “One of our vendors got onto our environment and made a change to a running script. We were down for about a day and a half on Friday through Saturday,” said Rollins.

But because Freeman Health had the platform and its solutions already in place, it was able to monitor activity in its environment closely while they fixed the problem. “I talked to the executive team,” said Rollins, “and said it was time to turn on multifactor authentication. We turned it on, and it was just that simple.”

Results: More secure systems, a satisfied insurance provider, and safe, quick access for all system users

With Imprivata serving Freeman Health in a role that Rollins described as a “trusted advisor,” the health system leveraged Imprivata Enterprise Access Management, Imprivata Vendor Privileged Access Management, and Imprivata Patient Privacy Intelligence for its digital identity management and security needs.

The added security measures created easier, standardized workflows, cutting the average login time for users from 20 seconds to two.

The added security measures created easier, standardized workflows, cutting the average login time for users from 20 seconds to two. “What physicians love is: they can be in the middle of working on documentation for a patient, tap out, go to lunch, then come back, tap in, and they’re right there in the same spot,” said Rollins, adding, “It was extraordinary how many visiting physicians come in to see us and say, ‘How long before you do this in our area? Can we have it in my clinic?’”

These solutions also helped Freeman Health embrace the agility of allowing virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) devices. “We went from having virtually no VDI devices in our environment. Now we have 2,000. Imprivata Enterprise Access Management is the real reason we were able to do that.”

Freeman Health has observed remarkable success using these solutions. Along with the solutions empowering Freeman Health, Rollins also lauded the smooth implementation process. “They collaborated with us to help understand how to use the tools, how to deploy them, and understand how our customers could get a good experience using them,” said Rollins. “In the end, implementation was really a non-event, because it was not hard to do.”

This fruitful partnership set up Freeman Health for success due to such a close collaboration. “Imprivata knows what we’re doing. They know what’s important to us. They know where we are headed,” said Rollins. “And it’s because the solutions work, and they have always been right there when we need them.”



Imprivata delivers simple and secure access management solutions for healthcare and other mission-critical industries to ensure every second of crucial work is both frictionless and secure. The Imprivata platform of innovative, interoperable access management and privileged access security solutions enables organizations to fully manage and secure all enterprise and third-party identities to facilitate seamless user access, protect against internal and external security threats, and reduce total cost of ownership.

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