Hospital Service Provider Simplifies Clinical Collaboration

Barwon Health is building Virtual Experience Infrastructure to provide reliable experience for desktops and telephony.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Customer:** Barwon Health
- **Industry:** Healthcare
- **Location:** Australia
- **Size:** 6000 Employees

EXPECTED BUSINESS IMPACT
- Enhance patient experience
- Increase utilization of clinical resources
- Strengthen staff confidence in IT infrastructure
- Minimize risk by reducing potential points of failure

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Business Challenge

South West Alliance of Rural Health (SWARH) is a virtual IT organization owned by 13 Australian hospital and health networks. The largest is Barwon Health, a regional health network with 22 sites spanning 60,000 square kilometers. Barwon Health is recognized throughout Australia as a leader in the development of electronic health records (EHRs) and for applying IT to improve healthcare.

Barwon Health clinicians and staff use approximately 3000 access devices, including PCs, laptops, and thin clients. SWARH manages these devices as well as 4000 Cisco Unified IP phones, a number expected to double to 8000 by 2012. To mitigate risk and simplify management, the organizations wanted an integrated infrastructure for desktops as well as telephony. "Our main goal was providing a reliable experience for clinical staff accessing our internal information systems," says Paul Cohen, deputy CEO at Barwon Health. In addition, Barwon Health wanted to prepare to make information and services available to mobile clinicians and staff anywhere, even patients' homes, on any device, including iPads.

Solution and Expected Results

Through SWARH, Barwon Health is implementing the Cisco® Virtualization Experience Infrastructure (VXI), a unified platform for telephony as well as data access available across Barwon Health's 22 sites. "Converging previously disparate systems will allow a more reliable experience for clinicians and patients and enable the next wave of electronic health care delivery," says Cohen.

The Cisco Unified Computing System™ and the 10-Gbps Cisco Nexus® switch architecture at the core of the Cisco VXI are already in place. In the first phase of the rollout, clinicians in the intensive-care unit are accessing electronic health records (EHRs) from thin clients. When the infrastructure has been fully deployed, Barwon Health clinicians will be able to see which specialists are currently available and reach out to them directly from a laptop or iPad, with videoconferencing or Cisco Jabber™ for presence and instant messaging. A nurse who needs to ask an oncologist about a drug reaction, for example, will be able to see if the oncologist is online, and then click to send an instant message for a prompt response. To escalate to a phone call, either party will simply click again. And if the system shows the specialist is not available, the nurse will know to send an email instead of wasting time calling. "Enabling visiting nurses to quickly reach out to specialists anywhere in the region will have application across many of our specialty services, including helping palliative-care patients remain home as long as possible," says Cohen.

SWARH has already virtualized the Cisco Unified Communications environment on the Cisco Unified Computing System. Consolidating from 100 physical servers to just four or five server blades reduces data center space requirements and management overhead. "For the first time, our telephony service can share the same highly

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reliable platform that supports our clinical services," says Garry Druitt, chief information officer for SWARH. "Clinicians can do their jobs instead of having to worry about the reliability of the environment." Cisco partner Dimension Data provides integration and support services for the Unified Computing System.

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> — Paul Cohen, Deputy CEO, Barwon Health

Major benefits of Cisco collaboration technology and the Cisco VXI for Barwon Health will include:

- **Support for clinical workflow:** "Consolidating to one platform and eliminating other points of failure makes it that much easier to manage the experience," says Cohen.
- **Mobility:** With the Cisco VXI, clinicians will be able to securely access EHRs from anywhere, on any device, including Cisco® Virtualization Experience Client (VXC), iPad, or laptop.
- **Infrastructure for telemedicine:** Specialists need to drive up to two hours to the rural areas that Barwon Health serves. The Cisco VXI supports video conferencing, and Barwon plans to increase its use of video assessments to save driving time and increase patient convenience. "Eliminating driving time will help us administer treatment sooner, for better outcomes," says Ann Larkins, director of information services for Barwon Health.
- **Improved patient experience and more efficient use of human capital:** With Cisco Jabber on iPads or laptops, clinicians will be able to see whether coworkers are available and whether to reach out to them with voice, instant messaging, or email.
- **Low-cost growth:** Cisco UCS B200 Blade Servers can support 100 zero-client sessions in SWARH's environment.
- **Ease of management:** The Cisco In-Service Software Upgrade (ISSU) feature of Cisco Nexus switches makes it unnecessary to schedule downtime. And the ability to manage all Cisco Nexus 2104XP Fabric Extenders through a single pair of Cisco UCS 6140 Fabric Interconnects minimizes management overhead, helping SWARH move toward delivering IT as a Service.

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Collaboration solutions, visit: http://www.cisco.com/go/collaboration.
To find out more about Cisco Virtualization Experience Clients, visit: http://www.cisco.com/go/vxc.
To find out more about Cisco Virtualization Experience Infrastructure, visit: http://www.cisco.com/go/vxi.

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