

Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley (MATLV) Improves Patient Care with Help from AEP Networks Netilla, Secure Application Access

Implementing a robust network infrastructure that would secure electronic patient records according to HIPAA standards.

The Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley, an independent physician-owned professional corporation in Pennsylvania, was formed in 1993 to help physicians focus their efforts on caring for their patients instead of getting bogged down with the administrative functions of running their practices. The medical industry is under constant pressure to make physicians' practices more efficient while improving patient care. Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley helps its members deal with this dilemma by providing doctors with the services and support to handle the business aspects of their practices, allowing physicians to focus entirely on patient treatment. Over the last two years, MATLV implemented an automated, computerized system to help improve the daily administration of its 30 member offices. MATLV also upgraded its communication and network security infrastructure by centralizing network communications for all 30 offices using AEP Networks' Netilla, Secure Application Access product. Netilla has streamlined network management and gives members secure, remote access to various software applications, including patients' electronic health records, from their offices, clinics or any other location with an Internet connection.

MATLV Automates Administrative Functions for Physicians

Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley undertook a major project to automate administrative and patient care processes for its members including billing, scheduling and generating electronic patient health records. Before implementing this model, the patient encounter was recorded either entirely by hand-written notes, or by a combination of hand-written notes and dictated recordings that were

later transcribed and added to the patient's paper chart.

The paper charts have been replaced with tablet PCs that physicians carry with them to each appointment. First, the software application alerts doctors when their patients arrive in the reception area. Then, when a patient is diagnosed, the physician enters their notes directly into the patient's electronic medical chart, including orders for prescriptions, lab tests, x-rays, etc.



In most cases, prescriptions and test orders are sent electronically from within the system to pharmacies and labs; prescriptions are often ready for pick-up by the time the patient arrives at the pharmacy. The computerized system also automates scheduling and billing. To speed up the payment process, doctors generate billing codes within the system during patient visits and the insurance companies are automatically billed for those appointments. MATLV wanted to implement a robust network infrastructure that would secure these new electronic patient records according to HIPAA standards. The physician members would also need to access this information from their offices, homes or other locations. To do this, MATLV installed AEP's Netilla Secure Application Access.

MATLV's Remote Access Solution: AEP Netilla

Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley chose to implement a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) virtual private network to centrally manage network security and remote access for its 30 doctors' offices. An SSL VPN would give MATLV members easy access to its applications and electronic patient records from any standard web browser.

It would also enable MATLV to centrally manage security and connectivity for all members, and to remotely manage all the servers within its system. Bryce Bowman, IT Coordinator, chose AEP Networks' Netilla, Secure Application Access for the job.

Netilla provides the highest levels of network security by only making applications and patient health records available to authorized users. Netilla combines two secure application access modes: access to intranet applications via HTTP reverse proxy and network-layer access which enables PC-based applications to exchange data with central servers through an SSL tunnel. Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley can be confident that sensitive patient information is completely secure because Netilla is in full compliance with HIPAA security and privacy laws.

"Netilla has met and exceeded our expectations for security and centrally managing all communications. The product was easy to install, is straightforward to manage and is very simple for our members to use. We have always received professional, knowledgeable support from AEP Networks, and have been extremely pleased with the service." Bryce Bowman, Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley

Bowman first heard about AEP Networks through a recommendation from a company MATLV works with for data hosting. Netilla was chosen because it was "highly recommended," enables easy, yet highly secure access to applications and electronic patient records and offers a variety of remote

access connectivity options including RDP and true tunnel. After choosing Netilla, Bowman called upon Advanced Micro Computer Specialists in Horsham, PA to assist with the implementation.

"Our greatest challenge," said Bowman, "was how to provide our physicians with real-time access to patient data, while maintaining an extremely high level of security and not compromising ease of use. Netilla gave us the ability to centralize security and connectivity and provided the flexibility we needed to support our legacy applications while implementing the new electronic health record system.

Due to the complexity of rolling out an electronic scheduling, billing and patient record system, we didn't necessarily know upfront what the best method of access for our applications would be. Choosing Netilla meant we could make those decisions on the fly." Medical Associates of the Lehigh Valley also uses Netilla in conjunction with other technologies to scan information securely into patient records. Important health information such as x-rays, insurance cards, information on chronic conditions and other non-electronic documents can be scanned into the patient record and stored electronically. By scanning, or abstracting, crucial documents within patient charts and storing them on the network, important medical information can be associated with new digital patient files and accessed via Netilla

The Result

By offering real-time access to centralized health information resources, MATLV helps members streamline administration and guarantees HIPAA-compliant security standards. Giving physicians anytime, anywhere remote access to patient health records and administrative applications means doctors can spend less time filling out forms and searching through paper files and more time making sure their patients receive the best care possible.

United States

Toll-Free: +1-877-638-4552
Tel: +1-732-652-5200

Email: sales@aepnetworks.com

Europe

Tel: +44 1344 637 300

Web: www.aepnetworks.com

Greater China

Tel: +8621 5116 7120

SE Asia, Singapore

Tel: +852 2961 4566

Japan

Tel: +81 3 5979 2149

Australia/New Zealand

Tel: +61 2 9413 2282

Malaysia

Tel: +60 32166 2260