August 07, 2017 | By Jackie Carr

Epic Move: UC San Diego Health Transitions to Cloud Technology

UC San Diego Health has moved its electronic medical records (EMR) system to the cloud. The move to an Epic-hosted cloud environment is part of a long-term strategy to shift away from traditional data centers to a less expensive, more reliable and secure repository for patients' medical records.

UC San Diego Health has moved its electronic medical records system to the cloud.

"By creating greater operational efficiencies, we can invest more time and resources in patient care," said Mark Amey, associate chief information officer, UC San Diego Health. "UC San Diego Health has deployed a number of strategies to allow its hospitals and clinics to be more agile and respond to demand at a rapid pace within a robust disaster recovery environment."

Cloud computing means storing and accessing data and programs over the internet in a hosted, shared environment rather than on a local server or personal computer. The cloud infrastructure is resilient, offering more uptime with redundant systems that protect data. UC San Diego Health plans to fully deploy cloud-based solutions for all data storage needs within three years.

"Health systems both large and small are seeking secure and cost-effective approaches to providing EMR capabilities to their users," said Stirling Martin, Epic senior vice president. "UC San Diego Health is the first academic health system to make the migration from their own self-hosted Epic infrastructure to Epic's state-of-the-art cloud hosting environment."

A cloud-hosted environment helps UC San Diego Health to meet industry standards to safeguard patients' protected health information. Cloud computing enables timely cybersecurity updates and patching as well as heightened security controls. Cloud computing

also permits easier disaster recovery and enables hosting vendors to focus on application specific security needs.

"This is our first significant milestone in moving key pieces of infrastructure into the cloud to provide 'always-on' solutions from anywhere that can be scaled to our growing geographical print," said Adam Gold, chief technology officer, UC Irvine Health and UC San Diego Health. "The cloud approach allows us to better provide innovative technology to support outstanding clinical care, research, and teaching."

The information services team has moved approximately 10,000 workstations at UC San Diego Health to this virtual delivery method, allowing users to access the electronic health record via the cloud. The team has also integrated over a hundred third-party applications that work with Epic within the new cloud environment.

UC San Diego Health is the hub for a single electronic medical records system serving UC Riverside Health and community practice affiliates, a cost-saving arrangement that improves coordination of care among physicians. UC San Diego Health will also share its EMR system with UC Irvine Health starting this November.

Additionally, Christopher Longhurst, MD, chief information officer at UC San Diego Health, is the sponsoring executive for the development of a UC Health-wide data warehouse, integrating patient data across the UC's five academic health systems, which together comprise the fourth largest health care system in California. This initiative supports medical decision making, clinical research and population health throughout the state.

In July, UC San Diego Health was named one of the nation's "Most Wired" health systems by *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine. The award recognizes hospitals and health systems that excel in using information technology to advance patient care and population health, protect the privacy and security of patient information, and bring greater efficiencies to operations.

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