

COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET IS THE BEST MEDICINE FOR INSPIRA HEALTH NETWORK



SITUATION

- Two providers merged to create a 60-site healthcare network in five southern New Jersey counties
- Newly-merged provider wanted to continue digital healthcare initiatives for all employees and medical staff and eventually include patients

CHALLENGE

- Expand Ethernet services to more facilities
- Provide network capacity that can handle bandwidth-intensive files

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business Ethernet Private Line
- Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet
- Six (6) Mbps Ethernet Private Line Over Hybrid/Fiber Coax

RESULTS

- Scalable network infrastructure to handle transfer of large data files
- Improved communication between healthcare staff and patients
- Foundation to introduce future healthcare technology initiatives

High-performance Wide Area Network solution enables delivery of Electronic Medical Records and Radiology Images wherever doctors need them

MERGER OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS GIVES NEW JERSEY PATIENTS ACCESS TO A WIDE ARRAY OF TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN MEDICAL SERVICES

Inspira Health Network is a non-profit health organization that provides primary, emergent and specialty care to patients at more than 60 facilities located throughout five southern New Jersey counties. Its employees use the latest medical technology to annually treat nearly 35,000 patients and more than 168,000 emergency-room visitors; perform more than 18,000 surgeries and deliver 3,200 babies.

Created last year after the merger of two of New Jersey's premier healthcare systems – South Jersey Healthcare (SJH) and Underwood-Memorial Hospital – Inspira has a strong foothold in the region with three medical centers, three health centers and dozens of outpatient sites.

The organization aims to deliver the best possible and most affordable care. To meet that standard, Inspira uses electronic medical records, high-resolution radiology images and other technology-based offerings as part of its standard operating procedures. As such, employees – especially the medical staff delivering care to patients – need a dependable network service that can quickly transfer large data files so they can serve patients with ease.

“The more we become electronic with our records – and everything we do related to patient care is becoming digital – we can't afford to have any downtime,” said Thomas Pacek, vice president and CIO of Inspira Health Network.

SCALABLE NETWORK CAPACITY NEEDED TO TRANSFER LARGE DIGITIZED PATIENT RECORDS

The merging of South Jersey Healthcare and Underwood-Memorial Hospital improved the medical care available to patients in the region, but it also presented a clear challenge to the new Inspira Health Network.

Inspira had to seamlessly integrate networks to connect SJH and Underwood-Memorial Hospital facilities. Inspira also needed scalable capacity to accommodate transfer of bandwidth-intensive patient data between medical centers, health centers and physician offices. It was also needed to support patient-facing initiatives, such as the creation of a dedicated portal that would allow patients to view their medical records and other documents, and to communicate directly with healthcare professionals.

SJH was already using Comcast Business Ethernet services and it was pleased with the service. After the merger of the two providers, Inspira executives wanted to continue working with Comcast, and so they brought Comcast in to help design a comprehensive network solution that would link Underwood-Memorial Hospital facilities to SJH facilities.

**COMCAST
BUSINESS**

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*Thomas Pacek
Vice President and CIO
Inspira Health Network*

COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET LINKS MEDICAL FACILITIES ACROSS SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

With its vast network reach and portfolio of Ethernet services, Comcast responded and linked the merged facilities with a Wide Area Network (WAN) solution that combined several different Ethernet services, including:

- Five 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) Ethernet Private Line (EPL) connections that run between four locations: Inspira Medical Center Vineland, Inspira Medical Center Elmer, Inspira Medical Center Woodbury and Inspira Health Center Bridgeton;
- 11 additional EPL connections with speeds of between 10 and 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) to link eight remote sites to Bridgeton and three remote patient facilities to Elmer;
- Six 6 Mbps EPL over Hybrid Fiber Coax (HFC) lines that now connect two remote sites to Elmer and four to Woodbury; and
- Two 100 Mbps Ethernet Dedicated Internet (EDI) connections at both its Vineland and Elmer locations to improve Internet access speeds.

According to Pacek, “One of the great things about our Comcast Business Ethernet services is the ability to reroute our data traffic through a separate private line to access our files from any of our connected locations. This, combined with being able to quickly scale up our bandwidth with a simple phone call instead of a site visit, has allowed our doctors and nurses to be more responsive to our patients by having all the information at their fingertips, regardless of location.”

COMCAST ETHERNET ALLOWS HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TO PLAN FOR DIGITAL FUTURE

With Comcast Business Ethernet services, Inspira Health Network can pursue its digital healthcare initiatives with confidence. Prior to the merger, South Jersey Healthcare and Underwood-Memorial Hospital had each digitized its medical records. Now Inspira is consolidating the records into one system, taking advantage of its Ethernet service to easily transfer documents between facilities.

Through Inspira’s Health Information Network, physicians can access – from a smartphone or tablet – information, surgery center notes, home health diagnostics, and more data as they move from one patient to the next. This secure, fast network access keeps doctors from juggling paper files and returning to their offices to grab more files and instead enables them to spend more time with patients. And patients will soon benefit from the network as Inspira hopes to create a dedicated Patient Portal so that they can review information about their health.

With Comcast Ethernet services, Inspira was also able to implement a state-of-the-art business continuity initiative. Staff can access records and information through multiple paths to Inspira’s data center. This multi-path access came in handy recently when a firewall went down at an SJH facility and the medical staff’s request for data was simply routed to another facility. Inspira will soon replicate data in another location to further ensure continuous access to patient information.

“We have a really good relationship with Comcast, and its Ethernet services have proven to be extremely dependable. As we acquire new practices, having a technology partner that can provide us with consistent connectivity, high speeds and vast network coverage will allow us to continue to make necessary technological advances so that we can remain a premier health network,” added Pacek.