

HOSTED TECHNOLOGIES:

- HIPAA Hosting
- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Citrix XenApp

QUALITY PHARMACY MANAGEMENT - A HIPAA CASE STUDY

Connectria - supporting HIPAA compliance through managed hosting.

Quality Pharmacy Management (qPM) provides remote pharmacy services to healthcare institutions. Given their daily access to patient information, it's imperative that qPM have the necessary security and controls in place to meet the demands of HIPAA compliance. Learn how Connectria Hosting has teamed up with qPM to deliver a reliable and secure hosting solution in support of HIPAA compliance.





About qPM

The evolution of technology, particularly the internet, has paved the way for a host of new innovative businesses and services. Quality Pharmacy Management (qPM) is a prime example of a company that leverages technology to deliver quality healthcare services.



Founded in 2005 out of Denver, Colorado, qPM was launched by 5 partners who shared a vision; to provide high quality remote pharmacy services to hospitals and healthcare organizations that needed them. qPM's core market includes hospitals in small and rural communities that either have limited pharmacy services (e.g. may only operate during business hours) or have no on-site pharmacy services at all.

qPM offers pharmacist consultation from a remote location so that the rural hospital can offer to physicians, nurses and patients access to a pharmacist 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Through technology, qPM fills a gap by enabling pharmacists to connect

to hospital computer systems remotely, essentially providing the same level of service as having a pharmacist on site. Since the hospital or healthcare organization does not have to invest in a full-time pharmacist, they can accrue significant savings by using remote pharmacy services only when they need them.

qPM is licensed and operating in Colorado, Oregon and Alaska and is expanding across the United States. They currently employ 20 people, consisting of full-time and part-time pharmacists.

HIPAA Challenges

Hospital pharmacy is a process in which much of the dispensing of medications is automated through machinery. It takes a pharmacist to review the physician's orders, approve them and enter them into the computer systems and let the automation take over from there.

First, a qPM pharmacist receives orders from a routed fax or connecting into the hospital's scanner systems. The qPM pharmacist answers calls as if they're in the hospital facility, and clinically review medications. Once deemed appropriate, the qPM pharmacist remotely accesses the hospital systems to process medication orders.



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In support of this process, qPM started out with pharmacists using PCs / Macs and terminal services solutions. As qPM grew and took on more clients as well as employees, their terminal services solutions became too limited, too difficult to manage individually and they soon outgrew their infrastructure.

It became apparent that qPM needed a Citrix-based solution where they could minimize the amount of installation and configuration they had to do on individual PCs or Macs at pharmacist's sites. They were also looking for a hosting solution that could support their Software as a Service (SaaS) platform with HIPAA support.

As a result, qPM looked at Citrix based hosting providers who could cover their HIPAA compliance needs in a secure manner. Because of their distributed model, qPM keeps all records electronically. In doing so, HIPAA has a large amount of overhead associated with that paperless world. In connecting in with their clients, qPM routinely accesses patient data and must adhere to HIPAA regulations and comply with use of electronic protected health information (ePHI). This includes securing access to critical hospital systems and data.

qPM also has Business Associate agreements with those clients under the realm of HIPAA so they had to ensure that their connectivity solutions and workflow process solutions that were paperless, had to be met within the confines of HIPAA. So in looking at any electronic software solution, they had to make sure they had all the pieces secured and tucked in.

Choosing Connectria

The search for a Citrix-based hosting solution to support qPM compliance was led by their VP of Technology, David Bilyeu. Responsible for any and all technical components that help bridge the gap between pharmacist and client hospitals, David had clear criteria and expectations in mind for choosing the right hosting company. And as a licensed pharmacist and IT healthcare professional of over 20 years, David had an extensive background and understanding of HIPAA compliance.

In addition to HIPAA compliance and Citrix support, qPM expected a high level of support and a high level of reliability in terms of uptime on their systems.

Following an extensive evaluation of hosting vendors, including Rackspace and ServePath, qPM selected Connectria.

According to David, Connectria had the HIPAA compliant solution that made it an "easy decision to make" and "the most logical choice" in their investigation. "The HIPAA aspect of what Connectria provided was a comfort to see...a good safety net for qPM to be able to adopt. In addition to supporting our HIPAA compliance, Connectria's Citrix solution was a key factor. Connectria's ability to provide software on a single hosted machine minimized the amount of configuration that they had to do on any individual PCs."

Other benefits of the Connectria HIPAA solution include a measurable ROI versus an in-house alternative, as well as an improved and timely compliance than what qPM could have done on their own.

The Citrix solution that Connectria provides allows pharmacist to securely connect into their clients through a firewall. In addition to Connectria's advanced firewall support, qPM cited support for advanced data encryption as a key service. Connectria's solution represents a large portion of their technical infrastructure and complements qPM's internally-developed, web-based application that pharmacists use to manage their workflow.

David further noted, "nothing frustrates me more than not being able to get support when I need it. And I must admit, since going with Connectria, the support has been phenomenal. I recall the initial installation

"I couldn't be more pleased with the service Connectria has provided to us. I understand things break from time to time in the area of technology. But it's how you respond to these issues that really makes or breaks the success of a vendor. I hope our relationship with Connectria continues well into the future."

*David Bilyeu, RPh. MCIS
qPM, VP of Technology*

going very well, and the level of access I had into Connectria's technical staff was superb. Since that initial startup I have just been nothing but completely pleased with the response time, the uptime and the resolutions that have occurred to problems.

About Connectria

Connectria provides award-winning cloud computing, managed hosting and custom hosting solutions for more than 1,000 customers in over 30 countries worldwide. We are experts in complex multi-vendor solutions, and we support the broadest range of technologies, managed services and security in the industry.

At the core of Connectria is our No Jerks Allowed® company philosophy. As The Jerk Free Company®, we've established a unique culture where every individual goes "the extra mile" to take care of our customers. Being The Jerk Free Company® extends beyond our people too. We make it easy to do business with us through flexible terms, scalable solutions and straight-forward pricing to serve the hosting needs of large and small organizations alike.



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