

Expect the worst, prepare for the worst

Digital patient information is no longer the anomaly but the norm in healthcare. Indeed, the amount of data in healthcare is staggering. The U.S. healthcare system is already on its way toward amassing a zettabyte (10^{21} gigabytes) of data and is expected to eventually hit yottabyte (10^{24} gigabytes) levels, according to statistics noted in *Transforming Healthcare Through Big Data*, a report published by the Institute for Health Technology Transformation.¹ Much of this information is important as well, as data is now being used to cure disease, improve quality of life and avoid preventable deaths.

That's precisely why healthcare organizations need to be prepared with a comprehensive plan when disaster strikes. These unsettling events can come in many forms, as the Health Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS) cites, including natural disasters, bioterrorism, epidemics, unexpected downtime and security threats. With cyberattacks becoming more pervasive, threats to IT systems are becoming more common.

The problem, however, is that responding to a disaster calls for far more than what was previously required. As Bryan Matsinger, account executive, healthcare, Sungard Availability Services (Sungard AS), points out in the white paper *Four*



Prescriptions for a Healthy Disaster Recovery Plan, “In the past, organizations would fall back on paper processes when a disaster struck. Organizations don’t have the capability to do that anymore.”

To successfully survive a disaster, organizations need to implement disaster recovery (DR) programs that will enable them to continually provide seamless patient care. While doing so, these organizations need solutions to provide continuous application availability; restore mission-critical applications in a timely manner; simplify the IT infrastructure; and comply with regulations while meeting strategic goals.

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Bryan Matsinger
Sungard AS



READ MORE: [Executive brief: Is Your Healthcare IT Environment Ready?](#)



READ MORE: [White Paper: Four Prescriptions for a Healthy Disaster Recovery Plan](#)

1. Institute for Health Technology Transformation. Transforming Healthcare Through Big data. <http://ihealthtran.com/big-data-in-healthcare>

Protect data by knowing what you've got

With an in-depth understanding of their IT infrastructure, healthcare organizations can reduce complexity and enhance application agility to more quickly recover from unplanned system downtime.

To create a multi-tiered DR plan that ensures 24/7 patient care delivery, organizations need to understand the following:

What connects to what. The links between applications have a direct impact on how applications need to be prioritized for recovery purposes.

What to do if recovery time objectives are not met. Organizations might have a four-hour recovery time objective (RTO) or recovery point objective (RPO) for a certain application, but they also need to know what steps to take to ensure 24/7 care if application vendors can't deliver.

Why testing is so important.

Rigorous and frequent DR tests and exercises instill greater levels of preparedness and confidence.

Armed with IT infrastructure knowledge – as well as an understanding of technology, people and governance, and the implementation of four strategies for developing a robust DR plan –



healthcare organization can identify and address areas of risk, and position themselves to strategically move toward organizational goals.

Four Prescriptions for a Healthy Disaster Recovery Plan

1. Provide continuous application availability.
2. Resume mission-critical operations with minimal staff.
3. Simplify management of complex health IT environments.
4. Prepare, achieve, maintain IT compliance while carrying out strategic initiatives.

Learn more about each prescription on pages 4-7.



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Accessing apps round-the-clock

“H ealthcare is moving at the speed of now, which means that patients as consumers are asking for 24/7 access to their patient information,” said Terry Humphrey, healthcare business director at Dell EMC.

This expectation is making digital patient information a necessity. As such, healthcare organizations must figure out how to provide access to all information collected and stored in electronic medical records (EMRs), as well as the hundreds of



other applications that feed into these systems. “All of these apps and servers targeted toward the EMR need to present real-time, relevant data,” said Jeff Worley, channel sales director, healthcare, Sungard AS.

As a result, healthcare organizations need to consider the entire eco-system of applications for the continuous care of their patients. To help support this strategy, redundant environments can be developed by leveraging advanced recovery services, colocation and managed recovery-as-a-service solutions.

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Terry Humphrey
Healthcare Business
Director Dell EMC



WATCH VIDEO:
Continuous Availability of All Applications Across the Care Continuum



Disaster recovery's building blocks

A comprehensive plan will help healthcare organizations quickly return to normal following a disaster. And a list of priorities can streamline efforts.

“Don't just think that you're going to take half of your IT environment and make sure it's up and running or it can get up and running quickly because that 50 percent you account for may not equate to any of your core applications or core systems,” Matsinger advised. “You really need to understand what's important and what's needed to keep your organization operating.”



Therefore, organizations should:

- Establish recovery time and recovery point objectives that serve to keep efforts on track
- Continuously review and test information systems, as they are continually evolving

- Create a comprehensive DR plan that:
 - Prioritizes business processes
 - Determines recovery requirements
 - Identifies critical applications
 - Tests/supports the recovery processes

What's more, a managed recovery program, which automates processes as much as possible, will make it quicker and easier to reach the desired end point. Perhaps most important, organizations should ensure that staff members know what to do when disaster strikes. “You want to make sure your people, and your resources, are in the right place at the right time,” Humphrey said.

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Terry Humphrey



WATCH VIDEO:

Leveraging Automation to Resume Mission-Critical Applications



Automation and the cloud: simplify, streamline and drive innovation

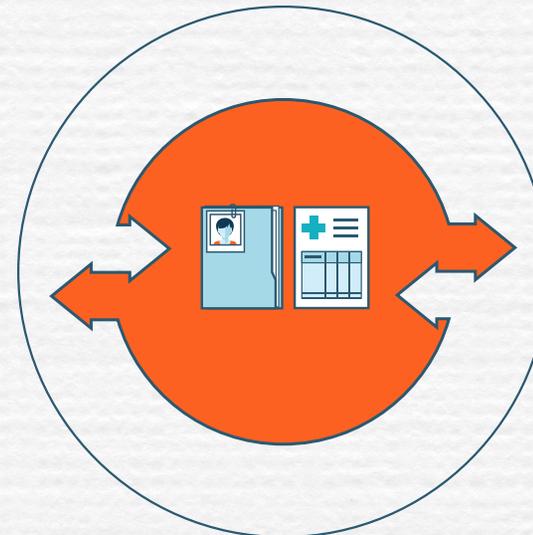
To help gain efficiencies and reduce IT costs, many healthcare organizations are balancing an environment of in-house and outsourced IT systems. Leveraging automation tools and technologies can help simplify the management of complex health IT systems.

Perhaps most important, hybrid cloud services can make simplification possible, as a hosted private cloud can be customized with different components and configuration options.

“You don’t need to dedicate your staff to implement updates or changes, or to support provisioning or deployment,” noted Humphrey in *Four Prescriptions for a Healthy Disaster Recovery Plan*. “As such, healthcare organizations can then refocus their staff on delivering innovation and the clinical projects that support the overall business mission.”

With such capabilities in place, organizations also can adopt a streamlined DR approach that integrates data management and protection into business and clinical applications.

“Trying to duplicate, replicate, mimic everything that’s happening in the IT environment to ensure a 100 percent successful recovery is just not realistic,” Humphrey added.



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Terry Humphrey



WATCH VIDEO:
**Managing Complex
Healthcare IT
Environments
More Simply**

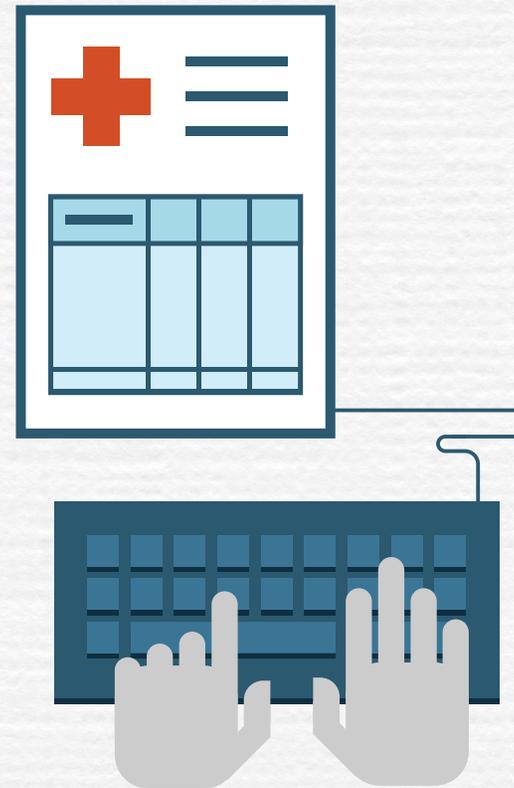


Balancing act: regulatory compliance and strategic initiatives

Healthcare organizations need to make sure that they simultaneously move forward with strategic IT programs while still meeting regulatory requirements.

Organizations that receive Medicare, Medicaid or any other federal funding for EMRs are required to have a documented, tested DR plan. Enlisting the help of a third party when working to achieve DR compliance as defined by HIPAA regulations enables organizations to key in on other priorities.

“A third party could provide the tests and full documentation to achieve the business continuity that’s expected by the government today,” Matsinger said. “A healthcare organization could then focus on their strategic initiatives while they’ve got a trusted partner that’s handling and maintaining their IT compliance from a regulatory perspective.”



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Bryan Matsinger
Sungard AS



WATCH VIDEO:
Balancing Regulatory Compliance With Strategic Initiatives



Partner with the best to prepare for the worst

With IT so intricately intertwined with the delivery of care, disaster recovery has become an area of burgeoning concern. Natural disasters, user error, cyber-attacks and most recently the proliferation of ransomware attacks all make healthcare data particularly vulnerable. Working with Sungard AS and Dell EMC, however, can help healthcare organizations overcome the challenges associated with providing valuable patient information to the right clinician around the clock, no matter what.

Experts in data protection, Sungard AS and Dell EMC provide comprehensive services to support your healthcare environment. Working together, the partners apply deep knowledge of healthcare IT workflows and EMR applications to design, build and run production and recovery environments that work effectively now and in the future.

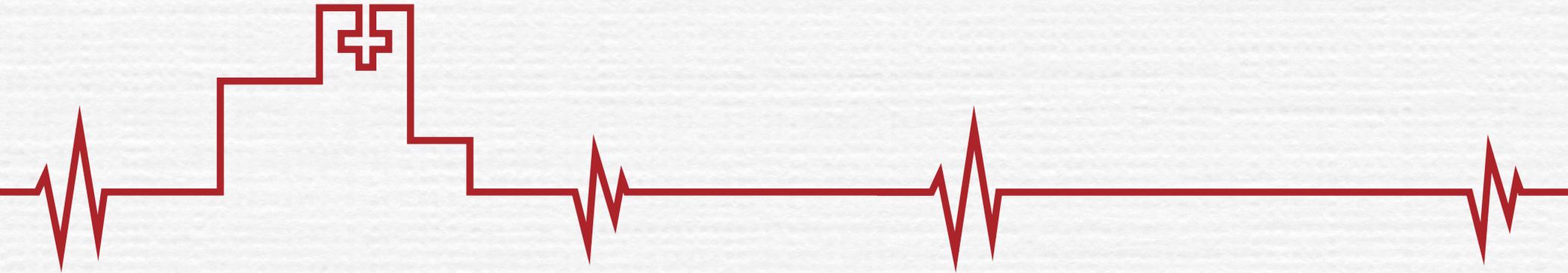
As a result, healthcare organizations can:

- Bridge the gap between traditional and agile IT
- Structure and streamline complex IT environments
- Orchestrate numerous “always on, always available” SaaS capabilities

- Maintain compliance with various industry regulations
- Assess crucial applications and business processes for strengths and vulnerabilities
- Design a production environment that supports better service to patients



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About Sungard Availability Services and Dell EMC



Sungard Availability Services and Dell EMC partner with your organization to provide a trusted Healthcare IT infrastructure to help ensure your environment is always on and always available and to deliver safer, patient care. We are committed to providing solutions that are responsive to the changing healthcare environment and work with your EMR, clinical, and business applications to enable regulatory compliance standards and ensure business continuity over distance. Our solutions provide a clear return on investment with proven capabilities, including continuous real-time data access, ability to meet business and clinical SLAs, and quantified recovery time and recovery point objectives, leading to improved patient engagement and outcomes.



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