

MidMichigan Health Protects Patient Data and Delivers Superior IT Service for Clinical Devices with HEAT

Founded in 1984, MidMichigan Health cares for more than 870,000 patients a year across 20 counties in Michigan. The non-profit healthcare system is affiliated with the University of Michigan Health System and offers medical and urgent care in 32 specialties, as well as home care.



MidMichigan Health
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH SYSTEM

ORGANIZATION

Name: MidMichigan Health

Location: Midland, MI

Industry: Healthcare

Website: www.midmichigan.org

SOLUTION

- HEAT Service Management version 2015.2, deployed on-premise
- HEAT Endpoint Management & Security Suite (EMSS)

BENEFITS

- Better manage IT changes to minimize unplanned outages
- Resolve issues relating to desktop clinical systems quickly and efficiently
- Protect and patch Windows systems and third-party applications
- Eliminated calls to service desk about malware infections

For healthcare providers like MidMichigan Health, delivering top-notch IT services is paramount. System failures or security breaches can have life-or-death consequences as well as financial and regulatory implications. To help achieve its IT service goals, MidMichigan Health uses HEAT Service Management to manage IT services and HEAT Endpoint Management & Security Suite (EMSS) to support and secure its clinical desktops. With HEAT solutions, clinical systems are protected. And when issues or service requests arise, they can be addressed swiftly, ensuring the healthcare system's 7,200 physicians and staff have ready access to the applications and systems they need to deliver patient care.

Leading the Charge for IT Service Management

MidMichigan Health recently upgraded from HEAT IT Service Management 7.2 to HEAT Service Management 2015. "When we saw the features that were added to HEAT Service Management, we wanted to upgrade," says Holly Vincent, Senior Desktop Specialist at MidMichigan Health.

One of the key advantages was ease of use. "The ability to access HEAT from any mobile device or any client was the priority-one issue in the field," says Jim Czyzewski, Desktop Support Supervisor at MidMichigan Health. "You can look at details from any computer."

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When clinicians or other employees have requests or issues related to clinical applications or systems, they can call the IT service center, which operates 24 hours a day. Calls from providers are prioritized and handled by a dedicated team. "Physicians or patients don't want to wait to have their problem fixed," Vincent says. "Using HEAT, we can get to an issue right away and dispatch the right technician." Agents in the service center triage all other requests, either resolving it the first time, or escalating to a specialized team.

The human resources service center also uses HEAT Service Management to manage requests and inquiries about benefits. "HEAT is easier to navigate, and they're looking to bring on additional parts of the HR umbrella into HEAT," says Czyzewski.

Reducing Unplanned Outages with Change Management

MidMichigan Health has matured its use of HEAT Service Management for change management over the years. In the beginning, getting change acceptance meant educating the clinical and IT advisory boards on the value of reviewing and scheduling changes.

“Scheduling changes takes longer for customers,” Vincent says. “We explain what goes on behind the scenes when we do something. From an IT perspective, our infrastructure team is really happy.”

That’s because operations run more smoothly, according to Czyzewski. Planning changes in advance means that quick or unexpected requests don’t result in changes that cause unintended outages or disruptions. “With HEAT Change Management, we have better communication, so we can make sure we have the right people on board for IT resources,” he says. “The big benefit is no surprises.”

Improving the Support Experience

MidMichigan Health uses HEAT Voice, which integrates with its phone system, to improve the support experience. People no longer have to call the service desk if they forget their network passwords. Now, they can call in and have their account unlocked or password reset through HEAT Self-Service. And that frees up service desk agents, who can focus on resolving other pressing issues.



It also uses HEAT Voice to get the word out fast if there’s an unplanned outage. “We can let clinicians and support staff know right away that the system is down and we’re working on it,” Vincent says.

Using HEAT Voice to prioritize calls was instrumental when MidMichigan Health moved from paper to an electronic medical records (EMR) system. “When a provider or physician called in, they could press 1 to get routed to a special line and pushed to the top of the queue,” Vincent says. “We do that for IT, too—if anyone reports a segment of the network down, they can speak with someone more quickly.”

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Protecting Clinical Systems

Guarding patient data is a federal requirement and key priority. MidMichigan Health uses HEAT Endpoint Management and Security Suite (EMSS) to protect 4,400 Windows desktops, laptops, and embedded devices from malware and targeted attacks.

“We have layers of defense using HEAT EMSS,” says Kevin Smerdon, IT Security Analyst II. “We use the full suite of vulnerability management, application whitelisting, device/port control and antivirus to dramatically decrease our attack exposure.”

IT uses EMSS to patch critical vulnerabilities in Office, .NET, and Internet Explorer, as well as common third-party apps such as Flash, Chrome, and Firefox, and more uncommon tools such as Notepad++. The team uses EMSS Content Wizard to develop and deploy custom content for unique changes, such as fixing old registry keys.

“Calls to the service center about malware have dropped to zero,” says Smerdon. “Before EMSS, we used to have at least one or two a week. For each infection, we spent hours removing the malware, and then we would have days of uncertainty. We wanted to stop malware from installing in the first place.”

That same protection is easily extended. MidMichigan Health acquired Alpena Regional Medical Center in spring 2016 (and is now named MidMichigan Medical Center – Alpena), and the service center will provide support as of December. “We rolled out the EMSS agent and are using the EMSS patch module to deploy our standard support tools to PCs to prepare to begin supporting them,” says Smerdon. “The patch process is so scalable that we can incorporate patching this entirely new hospital with no change to process and no impact to users.”

Smerdon also appreciates the visibility into endpoints that EMSS provides. “We have visibility to so much information,” he says. “We don’t have to go to different systems and do custom queries or exports.”

The result: “HEAT EMSS stops things early in the kill chain process,” says Smerdon.

Looking Ahead

MidMichigan Health continues to mature its use of HEAT Service Management, and it plans on rolling out self-service next. As it continues to protect itself from malware and other threats, it plans to expand the use of HEAT EMSS to protect its Windows servers and upcoming rollout of virtual desktops.