



Making connections and changing lives: How one non-profit puts patients first with modern technology

Access: Supports for Living is based on a mission that's simple yet profound—to help people live the healthiest and fullest lives possible. Covering a wide geographic area and offering a full range of services makes reliable communications and connectivity vital to optimal patient outcomes. When legacy data and voice networks were slowing them down, they turned to Windstream Enterprise for modern solutions to help keep their commitment to the needs, potential and care of every life they touch.

At a glance



Industry

Healthcare

Customer

11 locations across 9 New York counties

2,000 employees

Challenges

Lack of redundancy

Frequent network outages

Significant downtime

Limited bandwidth

Aging voice and contact center

Meeting HIPAA and PHI compliance

Solutions

SD-WAN

Active/active dual connections

Avaya UCaaS

Avaya CCaaS

Managed Network Security (MNS)

WE Connect portal

Results

Increased resiliency and bandwidth

Eliminated network outages

24/7 connectivity for patients

Improved productivity

Compassion and support for healthy communities

Access: Supports for Living is a non-profit health organization comprised of clinics, day habilitation centers, training centers and residences, working with more than 17,000 individuals. Their first priority is to those who live with the challenges associated with developmental disabilities and behavioral health issues, and each of their services is focused on the singular goal of helping each person live their fullest life possible. With 11 locations across New York's Hudson Valley, reliable connectivity and robust data are vital to operations as well as to the client experience.

The organization offers a full range of services—from treatment for substance use to supported employment. While technology and data may not be the first thing that comes to mind for client care, Clifford Potts, senior vice president of Business Analytics and Information Technology, explains the connection. “Like much of the non-profit space, we have a heavy reliance on data to ensure and measure successful outcomes.” As examples, data can identify individuals who are at-risk, and those who may need

different or more frequent touchpoints. It also allows for a more proactive approach, steering people away from in-patient hospital services and towards community-based behavioral health services.

“The Windstream Enterprise project management team did an outstanding job meeting our very aggressive implementation timelines.”

Clifford Potts
Senior Vice President

It was clear to Potts that the legacy network and voice systems were holding them back. He turned to Windstream Enterprise for modern solutions to support their mission.

Communication. Compliance. Care.

In addition to reliable voice and network communications, healthcare organizations have the additional challenge of ensuring privacy protection for patient information and secure telehealth sessions.

Potts and his team were feeling the constraints of single connections for all 11 locations, with no failover protection and downtime that damaged the client experience. Additionally, moving business-critical applications, like Electronic Health Records (EHR), to the cloud required reliable redundancy and more bandwidth.

Windstream Enterprise provided the remedy, deploying SD-WAN at all locations with dual connections in an active/active configuration, providing redundancy and higher bandwidth for seamless failover and communications continuity for patients.

Now, network outages have been eliminated. The increased bandwidth supports the migration of business-critical apps to the cloud and enables multiple, simultaneous, high-quality telehealth sessions.

To stay on top of bandwidth utilizations and manage trouble tickets, Potts and his team appreciate the visibility and control of the We Connect customer portal.

The aging on-premises voice systems and contact center lacked new functionality and required high levels of maintenance, creating further communication struggles. Windstream Enterprise implemented Avaya Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) for 500+ users and Contact Center as a Service (CCaaS) for 25 agents. Voice systems are automatically upgraded as new features and functionality are introduced, without on-site maintenance.

Clients who need immediate assistance now have 24/7 care and connectivity, as UCaaS enables automated routing of incoming calls from desk phones to mobile devices.

Security and regulatory compliance—a non-negotiable, ever-evolving and often complex responsibility for healthcare entities—posed another significant challenge for Access: Supports for Living. Security expertise could help the organization navigate the changing regulations landscape, ensuring compliance for HIPAA and Protected Health Information (PHI).

That expertise is exactly what they found in cloud-based Managed Network Security (MNS) from Windstream Enterprise. This solution not only protects network and voice traffic, but also provides peace-of-mind to those responsible for regulatory compliance. Potts now has the confidence that comes with the Windstream Enterprise security experts in the Cybersecurity Operation Center (CSOC) managing his firewalls.

The power to change lives

The collective digital transformation of patient care has accelerated in recent years, giving many healthcare providers, from individual provider practices to integrated delivery networks, a dual role of medical-expert-meets-tech-expert. Without a solutions partner, that role often comes with a steep and time-consuming learning curve.

It can also cause competing priorities, when IT staff and other professionals must spend time handling technological issues. Potts shares that the advancements made by Windstream Enterprise have relieved his staff from routine break/fix maintenance, and they are now able to focus on more strategic and innovative projects.

“The Windstream Enterprise support team understands our business and provides priceless consultative insights on recommending enhancements to improve our operations.”

Clifford Potts
Senior Vice President

Most importantly, these improvements give clients and their families, as well as the healthcare providers, a better experience, whenever and wherever they need it and give Access: Supports for Living the power to change lives.

Cloud-enabled connectivity, communications and security—guaranteed.

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