

## CASE STUDY

Technology is driving the shift in health care as hospitals respond to the Affordable Care Act and Meaningful Use requirements. Wayne Thompson profiles four projects that are enabling Mount Nittany Health to not only meet patient needs but enhance the capabilities of a modern health-care organization.

By Zach Baliva

### Electronic Health Record Implementation

#### THE CHALLENGE

Thompson became Mount Nittany Health's CIO in 2012 after the organization purchased its physician group of 130 providers; no integration existed between those providers and the existing 260-bed medical center and related facilities. "We had to get comprehensive clinical information about our patients to the point-of-care," says Thompson. "It was a system-wide need, so it meant getting appropriate acute care summary info to the ambulatory facilities and vice versa."

#### THE SOLUTION

First, Thompson's team analyzed two clinical systems to settle an ongoing debate. While the physician group used Allscripts, the hospital system used Meditech. After reaffirming the use of both, Thompson led efforts to automate and implement both EHRs ahead of Meaningful Use, with the help of J2 Interactive on the systems integration front. Step two involved a simple level of access for all providers through a single login to both systems universally.

#### THE RESULTS

Implementation began in 2012 and reached a key milestone a year later when computerized physician order entry went live. It was followed by an electronic data exchange. Although most of the work is complete, Thompson considers it a continuing journey that he is always refining.

**18**  
Months to complete project

**100%**  
Physicians who can access clinical information in any setting

**Wayne Thompson**  
Mount Nittany Health  
Executive Vice President & CIO

#### PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

A little outside help can often be critical to the successful implementation of a CIO's strategy. Mount Nittany partnered with J2 Interactive to consolidate medical records and coordinate patient care across its medical center and physician group EHRs. "We needed a partner that understood our business drivers, worked well with our software vendors, and had the experience to execute our vision," Thompson says. "J2 Interactive has certainly filled each of these requirements."





Innovative providers such as Mount Nittany Health are shaping the next generation of healthcare delivery.

They rely on J2 to make it possible.

- Technology Strategy
- Systems Integration
- Health Information Exchange
- Healthcare Analytics



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## Patient Portal Integration

### THE CHALLENGE

In the era of the Affordable Care Act, health-care providers are seeking deeper and more significant interactions with patients, communities, and populations. In the law's early years, Mount Nittany needed to meet Meaningful Use requirements—but perhaps more importantly, the health system needed to provide a unified virtual front door to its patients.

### THE SOLUTION

"We found an agnostic set of products and solutions that accept information from more than one backend EHR and seamlessly stitch the data to give each patient a single view," Thompson says. His teams used several components that process patient information from multiple sources and present that data in a clear and concise way.

### THE RESULTS

The patient portal meets Meaningful Use requirements for all ambulatory and acute care facilities. Patients log on to a single portal to see a combined view of information taken from any health-system provider.

**80%**

Of patients with portal access at Mount Nittany—Meaningful Use requires only 50 percent

**24/7**

Patients can access the portal all day and orders will be fulfilled the same or next day

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## Technology Infrastructure Redundancy

### THE CHALLENGE

Like many organizations, Mount Nittany had a network with several potential single points of failure. An interruption to storage or a server sent reverberations across the entire system.

### THE SOLUTION

Since Mount Nittany lacked a failover environment or other alternative, the strategy turned to mitigating risk. After looking at many solutions, Thompson partnered with VCE to develop a solution around their Vblock technology. Now, the infrastructure group is customizing a fully redundant environment split between Mount Nittany's main data center and another facility thirty miles away with separate power and ISP grids. "It will allow us to take key clinical systems and run them from either location," Thompson says.

### THE RESULTS

Thompson predicts Mount Nittany's uptime to approach 100 percent and says upgrades and tests should proceed without interrupting clinical services.

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## Technology Strategy Plan

### THE CHALLENGE

With so many changes occurring at once, Mount Nittany needed a robust technology plan to guide its governance structure and a new strategy for the future. "We wanted to guide key decisions to help systems migration, evolution, and standards," Thompson says.

### THE SOLUTION

Thompson met with stakeholders and held two retreats to develop a plan that takes Mount Nittany through 2018. In doing so, he relied on existing committees, but layered on top of those a steering committee comprised of various Mount Nittany department heads and leaders. The plan focuses on interoperability of various systems and required organizational restructuring through which IT reclaimed some out-sourced functions. Thompson's strategic plan won board approval in February 2015.

### THE RESULTS

Built-in metrics will measure training hours, customer satisfaction scores, uptimes, and other factors.