

Western Health delivers seamless access for clinicians with Imprivata OneSign

“We need our clinicians to have a seamless and frictionless experience; Imprivata OneSign provides that.”

Cameron McBride, CTO, Western Health

Key facts

Location: **Melbourne, Victoria**

Type: **Public Hospital Service**

Employees: **6,500**

Challenges

- Reduce burden of access on clinicians
- Increase security and information governance
- Adoption of new EMR

Results

- Seamless and frictionless experience for clinicians
- Removed group accounts and introduced multifactor authentication for data protection and information governance
- Rapid roll out of both Imprivata solution and EMR

Western Health, in Melbourne, Victoria, manages three acute public hospitals: Footscray Hospital, Sunshine Hospital, and the Williamstown Hospital. It also operates the Sunbury Day Hospital, and a Transition Care Program at Hazeldean in Williamstown.

Employing nearly 6,500 staff, Western Health has a strong philosophy of working with the local community in the western region of Melbourne to deliver excellence in patient care.

Business challenge

While embarking on a strategic digital transformation strategy, Western Health initiated that journey's first stage by implementing a new, hospital-wide, multi-site EMR solution. In analysing the impact that such a large project would have, it was quickly identified that making access to all systems efficient would need to be addressed. Cameron McBride, CTO at Western Health, comments, “Digital transformation is not about IT – it’s broader. It encompasses the whole organisation. We need our clinicians to have a seamless and frictionless experience.”

Part of assessing the business challenge included involvement from Richard Horton, Chief Medical Informatics Officer (CMIO), early in the process to better represent the pain points felt by clinicians and to understand the potential impact on clinical workflows. An exercise to map clinical workflows throughout the hospitals was carried out, identifying numerous points where clinicians interact with data and are required to authenticate. As Horton observes, “Staff were asking for the solution. With reduced passwords and quick access, it is just one less thing for them to do.”

As a result, it was felt that in order to better drive adoption of the EMR solution and support the digital transformation strategy, implementing a suitable single sign-on and authentication management solution should be integral to the overall project.

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The solution

Western Health required a solution to be the right fit for the purpose and to reduce risks in current workflows. Therefore, it needed to be an established product and they needed to see it working at other healthcare organisations. Cameron and his project team visited several hospitals who had already implemented similar solutions and then underwent a procurement process to select a suitable option for Western Health.

Following completion of the process, Imprivata OneSign was selected. This was due to it being the right fit for the needs of Western Health and, based on the previous track record of successful implementations that Imprivata had, introducing minimal risks.

Deep dive

Imprivata OneSign enables healthcare organisations to leverage the full benefits of their EMR and clinical applications along with virtualisation technology investments by building transparent, seamless, and convenient security into clinical workflows that streamline the clinicians' experience. By removing barriers that frustrate and distract clinicians – like repetitive manual logins and complex passwords – Imprivata OneSign saves clinicians valuable time and facilitates wider adoption throughout the hospital: a key requirement in digital transformation.

These benefits were further realised at Western Health where, following procurement, a pilot was rolled out in the Williamstown Emergency Department (ED) and operated for two months. Within the ED, computers are shared between staff and generally used by each clinician for a short amount of time. The combined Imprivata OneSign and virtualisation solution, made sessions ready and available to be used and reused almost immediately during the shift, proving invaluable. Prior to the rollout of the Imprivata solution, clinicians had been frustrated with the frequent need to log in and, as a result, would find ways to circumvent this in order to access and enter data. These time savings were not the extent of the benefits realised, as Helen Sinnott, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Informatics Officer comments: “It reduces the cognitive load on a nurse,” which helps ensure focus remains on patient care.

As a result of the success within the Williamstown ED, the team moved to deploy the solution across Western Health. The project team worked closely with Imprivata throughout the pilot to identify the necessary configurations and setup required across different departments and sites. This partnership approach was invaluable in ensuring a successful and rapid deployment across the rest of the health service.

One key benefit that the Imprivata solution provided was to help drive adoption of the new EMR. As part of the EMR implementation plan, a mapping exercise was undertaken across multiple areas to understand the workflows that clinicians were following and where they interacted with data. It was clear that clinicians were having to log in to a vast array of different applications, including the Cerner EMR, DXC i.PM PAS, BOSSnet, EDIS, and PACS. The mapping exercise also identified a range of complex workflows where clinicians would move around different locations, from being next to the patient one moment, to reviewing their data in the medications room next, while accessing data on workstations-on-wheels and fixed computers, each requiring a logon and logoff.

It was clear that addressing the issue of authentication, particularly because of introducing yet another username and password combination to access the new EMR, would help drive rapid adoption. If not addressed, this would have a negative effect not just on EMR usage, but also potentially increase time to care, medication errors, risk to patients, and clinician burnout due to the increased number of passwords and slow access. It was this challenge that Imprivata helped address. As Horton explains, “With Imprivata OneSign, staff don’t even think about it. IT should be invisible, it should just work.” He goes on to state: “Staff would be frustrated if it was taken away; there would be a lot of complaints.” Imprivata removed frustration with authentication through easy and frictionless access, giving time back to clinicians and streamlining access to patient data within the EMR.

A key element of the success of the solution deployment was to develop clinical buy-in to the solution and its changes. Awareness and communication were essential to facilitate change and adoption. The solution was branded as “Follow-me Desktop” to identify the solution and remember the correct processes. In addition, Horton undertook a roadshow around Western Health, speaking to over 1,300 clinicians, and demonstrating the workflows they would see with Imprivata OneSign. This approach was designed to take the fear out of change that can sometimes occur. In demonstrating the new, tap-on experience to clinicians, the response was universally positive: “A real wow factor in making things easier,” according to Sinnott.

During roll out, deployment staff from Western Health walked the floors to provide support and clarification to new users. Providing this direct contact for staff helped ensure a smooth transition and adoption of the new solution. Posters and flyers on the changes were also distributed.

Over time, Western Health will be looking at metrics to quantify the substantial benefits the Imprivata solution has brought. The original project brief defined key performance indicators that Western Health wanted to achieve, specifically making the logon process as quick as possible. With some clinicians logging in over 30 times per day, it is clear that any time savings in the process will bring positive benefits. In terms of qualitative feedback, “Staff are asking for the solution,” Horton finishes.

Results and benefits

Overall, the Imprivata solution has delivered against the requirements of the project brief. Imprivata OneSign now provides seamless and frictionless access to all applications for clinicians. Whether that be basic access to patient data at point of care or the ability to deliver more complicated workflows around medication prescribing. Overall, the hospital is seeing improved utilisation of devices and applications to support high quality care.

In terms of security, Barbara Warcok, Western Health Project Manager, states, “We have been able to wipe out the use of our generic accounts,” ensuring that access is only granted to those who need it and that complex passwords are now used rather than staff either using simple ones or writing them down. Two-factor authentication is now in place to meet information governance requirements and to ensure best practice protection of patient data. In short, for staff to access multiple applications and continue to deliver exceptional care whilst maintaining a high level of security for patient data, Imprivata has become a necessity.

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Finally, Western Health was able to rapidly roll out both the Imprivata solution and the new EMR across all of its hospital sites. Staff feedback has been excellent and, as a result, adoption high. Moving from pilot phase to full roll out was undertaken in a matter of weeks with over 6,000 users enabled for Imprivata OneSign and "Follow-me Desktop." Overall, the Imprivata project has been described as one of the most successful implemented at Western Health.

About Imprivata

Imprivata, the digital identity company for healthcare, provides identity, authentication, and access management solutions that are purpose-built to solve healthcare's unique workflow, security, and compliance challenges.

Closing

It is clear that reducing the burden of technology solutions on staff helps deliver transformational projects successfully and in a timely manner. Reducing the barriers to new technology has allowed clinicians at Western Health to focus more on core responsibilities of their roles, spending more time caring for patients and less on accessing the tools they need to do that.

McBride observes, "To deliver efficiency, you need to bring together technology, process, and people. We need our clinicians to have a seamless and frictionless experience. Imprivata does what it says."

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