St. Luke's University Health Network – Legacy Application Support

Project Background

St. Luke's University Health Network (SLUHN) is a HIMSS Stage 7, nonprofit, regional, fully integrated, nationally recognized network providing care, primarily in Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon, Schuylkill, Bucks, Montgomery, Berks, and Monroe counties in Pennsylvania and in Warren County, New Jersey.

By The Numbers

7 HIMSS EMRAM Stage-7 Hospital Health Systems with more than 200 sites and 1,200 beds

61,000 Annual admissions

240,000 Annual emergency room visits

1.4MM Ambulatory encounters

10,000 Employees

1,370 Physicians (representing more than 90 specialties; 92% board-certified)

1,300 Volunteers

Given its size and the breadth of its services, SLUHN required an enterprise-wide electronic health record (EHR) and revenue cycle system that could also meet the diverse needs of its thousands of employees and patients. Prior to EMR replacement, SLUHN leveraged two separate platforms - McKesson Horizon platform in acute care settings and Allscripts TouchWorks in ambulatory settings. After a 12-month system selection process, SLUHN chose Epic for its clinical and revenue cycle system. Due to the size and complexity of the implementation project, SLUHN identified a need for a partner to help manage their legacy systems during the transition.

An Ambitious Undertaking

SLUHN is one of the largest organizations in the country to deploy Epic simultaneously across all its hospitals at once while managing a patient capacity increase during the go-live phase. SLUHN's Chief Information Officer Chad Brisendine calls it "the single biggest technical investment" in the network's history.

SLUHN needed to continue using and maintaining their legacy systems during their transition, as their business was still growing. They needed to continue with quality reporting as well as their training programs. They wanted to ensure their staff felt supported by IT during the implementation. At the same time, they wanted to make sure their staff had the opportunity to engage with the project to deploy the new EMR. Making the decision to outsource legacy application support afforded SLUHN the ability to obtain flexibility in staffing and enabled their adoption of the new system.

> We weren't in hold mode, we were in a build and grow mode and we needed our EMR to continue that for us.
>
> -**Chad Brisendine**, VP & CIO, St. Luke's University Health System

Outsourcing Legacy Support: Lynchpin to Transition Success

SLUHN chose Galen Healthcare Solutions as their legacy support partner for several reasons: Galen's professional experience, knowledge of SLUHN's systems, and previous customer success. Galen has been supporting the healthcare community, and Allscripts Touchworks specifically, for the past ten years. Over the past 24 months, Galen has partnered with 269 healthcare organizations ranging in size from less than ten physician specialty groups, 100-200 provider IPOs, and 500 provider multi-specialty integrated delivery networks and academic medical centers.

"We wanted to make sure we continued to provide a premium service, so we asked for a premium service and that's what we got from Galen." -Chad Brisendine

To begin, SLUHN evaluated their resources, what applications they were going to focus on, and what additional initiatives might need attention outside of core support, including the additional training components they had in place. This wasn't simply a standard help desk support need, but was an evaluation of all the IT services that SLUHN provides. SLUHN assessed their current support model, including frequency, volume, urgency (high/medium/low tickets), and their current service agreement to make sure it was maintained or improved.

One key component was getting SLUHN's senior management on board with the concept of outsourcing application support while they transitioned their team to the Epic project. This included assuring there was seamless knowledge transfer, both with the SLUHN team learning their new Epic platform but also making sure IT staff transitioned their knowledge of the legacy systems to Galen.

Efficiency, Scalability, Expertise, Dependability

Based on several discussions with SLUHN staff, Galen recommended a phased, scaling of support that expanded from an initial core team of 2 senior consultants, to an additional 11 support analysts as needs increased during the transition. This recommendation was based on Galen's experience with similar projects where resourcing responsibilities and tasks changed throughout the effort.

SLUHN had very robust change management processes, tools and capabilities. Galen leveraged these to augment their work and support existing activities. Part of the contract and agreement included Galen providing metrics to SLUHN, including service level reporting to measure performance in terms of SLUHN's customers. If there was something that needed to be escalated SLUHN's key contact could coordinate the service.

> " The transition process happened quickly, it wasn't six months, it was closer to six weeks, but very smooth.
>
> -**Chad Brisendine** "

Measuring Success: Project Scorecard and Outcomes

"There's been remarkable success and results for support, with nine new sites, 144+ new providers, and being able to maintain those service levels throughout" – Chad Brisendine

The goals for the project schedule were exceed based on requirements by SLUHN. They pushed the entire transition much earlier than planned. Galen assumed full ownership within the first two months, including: full ticketing system ownership, 24/7 on call coverage, interface maintenance, and monitoring all build items and go live support. They were also able to achieve the following:

- Successful upgrades – 11.4.1 HF18 to 15.1 CU2; 15.1 CU2 to CU5; 15.1 CU5 to 15.1 CU8.

- Maintenance of 93% and higher incident ticket closure rate average across all teams every month, average of 99% incident ticket closure rate average across all teams for 12 months.

- Approximately 145 providers, approximately 1030 users onboarded from June 2016 through April 2017.

- Clinical Pathways, MIPS, MACRA build initiative.

> " When you look at the total breadth of what they did for us, it was really end-to-end. There wasn't one thing that they weren't taking care of us for. I've gone through a couple of these in the past where we've owned a few of the components and I would say it's better to let someone else deal with it so you can focus on the main task at hand: getting your resources focused on your new product that you're going to maintain.
>
> -**Chad Brisendine**

Legacy System Decommissioning & Migration

Clinical data migration is a focal point of the transition for SLUHN, as they have a vast amount of data they need readily available for clinicians. As part of their governance program, a physician team meets with the C-Suite regularly. They solicited Galen's expertise and perspective to participate with project planning and activities, but also assisting the physician leaders in understanding what data would be available, what's possible, and some of the issues and challenges surrounding clinical data migration and archival.

> " Galen's expertise is very extensive in this area. They're able to get into a detailed level discussion with the providers on what's going to be available, how the mappings going to look, what the import will look like, and what it will look like in the EMR.
>
> -**Chad Brisendine**