

Modernizing employee communication with affordable and modern HIPAA-compliant messaging



COMPANY
Dartmouth-Hitchcock



INDUSTRY
Healthcare



EMPLOYEES
10,000+



DEPLOYMENT
On-Premises

DARTMOUTH-HITCHCOCK (D-H) IS A NONPROFIT ACADEMIC HEALTH SYSTEM THAT SERVES A POPULATION OF 1.9 MILLION IN NEW ENGLAND. Across the system, D-H annually has more than 1.7 million outpatient visits, performs nearly 20,000 surgeries, discharges more than 25,000 patients, and cares for 31,000 emergency visits. When the time came to formalize existing ad-hoc usage of instant messaging, D-H needed to find a modern secure messaging solution that strictly adhered to HIPAA regulations and other important security requirements.

The problem

Without a formally adopted secure messaging solution, employees who were sitting right next to each other were forced to utilize the classic "stand up and yell at each other" method of communication far too often. Accordingly, in late 2013 D-H began evaluating business IM solutions including Microsoft Lync and the open source Openfire Server in particular. But Lync (now Skype for Business) was extremely cost prohibitive at scale and Openfire was missing a few important security features. Due to D-H's strict healthcare regulatory environment, most cloud solutions were immediately out of the running as well.



Competing priorities for resources meant that it was going to be difficult to justify the high costs associated with traditional messaging platforms like Skype. Open source alternatives tended to sacrifice security features, leaving them minimally useful in a regulated environment like ours.



Elias Hunt
Technical Lead

The solution

D-H deployed the data center edition of the on-premises Trillian Server and hasn't looked back since. Leveraging Trillian Server's modular design, D-H is able to keep all PHI-related storage secure and encrypted at rest behind the firewall while hanging a front-end Trillian Server on the DMZ for external employee access. The powerful combination of the award-winning Trillian clients across desktops and mobile devices ensures that employees never miss a beat during their work days. Here are some of the key benefits D-H has derived from their Trillian deployment:

- **Basic messaging; don't take it for granted.** Believe it or not, some organizations still haven't adopted messaging due to particular security requirements or concerns. As one example, employees at the D-H call centers (responsible for handling all incoming phone traffic across the entire health system) are now able to send each other messages while still on the phone with patients. Not having to put calls on hold to ask a question of a co-worker verbally results in shorter call times, faster decision making, and happier patients overall.
- **Group chats.** Administratively-controlled group chats mean employees who need to collaborate together can easily do so in realtime many-to-many group chats, replacing the need for hard to follow email threads. Whether it's as simple as gathering a lunch order or as complicated as coordinating a life-saving patient transfer with the DHART aviation crew, group chats are an important piece of D-H's Trillian use.
- **Chatbots and API support.** D-H is leveraging Trillian's built-in chatbot, Tricia McMillan, by hooking her into their existing web services infrastructure to provide various slash command support. In addition, they've taken advantage of Trillian Server's RESTful API to pull realtime presence information out of Trillian and into their internal ticketing system.
- **On-premises deployment.** In today's era of cloud-or-bust, there are fewer and fewer serious options for organizations that require or simply prefer on-premises software. Trillian Server fits the bill by giving D-H complete control over their secure messaging environment and integrates seamlessly with Active Directory.
- **Healthcare-centric features.** PIN code support, automatic lock screens, extensive control over how and where chat history and media are stored, encryption at rest and in transit, and a full suite of administrative policy options are just some of the compelling reasons for healthcare systems like D-H to choose the Trillian solution.
- **Transparent costs.** By choosing Trillian, D-H has been able to achieve its goal of providing its employees with a modern secure messaging solution that respects its regulatory requirements and doesn't break the bank. Because the on-premises Trillian Server is licensed by concurrently connected users and pricing is done by user tier, costs are predictable and there are no billing surprises.



Trillian has provided a solid low cost IM application for D-H for several years. However, they have also been willing to collaborate in order to develop a platform that can adhere to the strict regulatory requirements of healthcare. This is an example of a win/win relationship that can help drive down the cost of healthcare. Trillian supports mobile devices and with its latest update it provides capabilities that are comparable to more expensive products categorized as "secure texting".



Bill Weyrick
Director Information Systems

