

Electronic Patient Records Key to Improving Patient Care in 21st Century, says BridgeHead Software CEO – “ But Only With Secure Data Management

RealWire

Survey reveals half of doctors believe Electronic Patient Records will improve patient care as data volumes continue to rise all over the world

Ashtead, UK – Tuesday August 10 2010 – Healthcare data storage expert Tony Cotterill has called secure data management the “missing link” to improving patient care in the 21st century. Cotterill’s comments follow in the wake of research carried out by GS1 UK and Hospital Dr which discovered that half of doctors expect Electronic Patient Records (EPRs) to improve patient care by providing verifiable, consistent and complete data to support verbal handovers between medical staff.

“Electronic Patient Records (EPRs) will improve patient care, but only if the data feeding those records is well-managed,” said Cotterill, Chief Executive of [BridgeHead Software](#) [1], the [Healthcare Storage Virtualization](#) [2] company. “Healthcare data volumes are rising day after day. Secure data management is a challenge that cannot be avoided if hospitals are to prevent compounding their current infrastructure challenges as data volumes grow.

“To get the most value out of any digital patient records system – and in my view, the term ‘digital patient records’ encompasses all electronic data connected with a patient, whether the EPR, medical images or associated administration files – it is necessary for hospitals to consider a number of important factors concerning their data and storage management infrastructures.

“To be effective, patient records systems need to be underpinned by a robust data management and storage strategy so that data can be accessible and available to the relevant clinicians, hospital or administrative staff where and when it is needed without delay. Simultaneously, the data must also be safeguarded from inappropriate use and retained to support long-term patient care. An interoperable, vendor-agnostic data management and storage solution tailored specifically for healthcare’s complex data environment can streamline the management of patient information so that all hospital data can be stored in one central repository owned by the hospital,” he added.

“The good news is that more and more forward-thinking healthcare organisations are discovering that secure data management is the “missing link” in terms of maximising the value of a digital patient records system.”

According to the BridgeHead Software CEO, this approach would not only help

tackle the recognised issue of vast data growth and increase the utilisation of existing storage resources, but it would also require less management, maintenance, power and cooling, and it would allow the data to be optimised by tapping the power of advanced and shared features.

Cotterill also commented that disaster recovery (DR) is another area where secure, integrated data management is crucial.

“Most healthcare IT leaders are navigating a notoriously complex data environment, with different systems from multiple vendors managing different types of clinical data in different locations, both on and off hospital premises. When systems go down, healthcare IT teams need to know which applications should be brought back online in which order, with which data and storage systems,” he explained.

“An effective data and storage management framework can help you separate the 80% of static data (that is unlikely to be access or changed again) typically found in healthcare organisations from dynamic data that is regularly accessed and likely to change. This management is extremely important so as to ensure that healthcare data is optimised and stored in the appropriate locations and media in a manner that ensures backups are properly managed and completed in the available time windows,” he added.

“Ultimately,” explained Cotterill, “if there is an IT disaster, system recovery time can be measured in minutes and hours rather than hours and days. The stored data can simultaneously be protected using authentication and encryption technologies which help to ensure compliance with governance and regulatory issues, as well as satisfying privacy concerns.”

Cotterill offers up Healthcare Storage Virtualization (HSV) as BridgeHead Software’s solution to the data management challenges facing hospitals today.

HSV is a healthcare technology platform that decouples applications from the allocation and management of the physical storage hardware on which the application data is located. By separating these applications from the storage device/s, healthcare organisations have a lot more choice, flexibility and control over the way data is accessed, protected and managed.

The net effect is a positive one – better utilisation of hardware resources and, perhaps more importantly, the efficient access and use of critical electronic patient data, now and into the future.

“Hospitals no longer have to be tied into proprietary data storage contracts with their IT vendors,” said Cotterill. “Healthcare Storage Virtualization puts the hospital in control of its data environment. This intelligent, secure storage infrastructure enables clinicians and other care staff to quickly access patient data and get on with the task of treatment, rather than spending excessive time running in all-too-familiar administrative circles.”

According to recent research results from the [BridgeHead Software Data](#)

[Management Healthcheck 2010](#) [3], more than two-thirds (69 percent) of healthcare organisations expect their data volumes to increase this year.

And that, says Cotterill, is a key driver as to why HSV offers the most efficient and cost effective solution for healthcare organisations continuing to drown in data.

For more on the GS1UK and Hospital Dr research: <http://bit.ly/a4BWSf> [4]

For more on BridgeHead Software: www.bridgeheadsoftware.com [5]

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About BridgeHead Software

BridgeHead Software, the Healthcare Storage Virtualization (HSV) company, offers a scalable, future-proof platform to overcome rising data volumes and increasing storage costs while delivering peace of mind around the access, availability and protection of critical electronic patient data.

Trusted by more than 1,000 hospitals worldwide, BridgeHead Software solves healthcare organisations' backup, recovery and archiving challenges. BridgeHead's HSV solutions are designed to operate with any hospital's chosen software applications and storage hardware, regardless of vendor. This presents healthcare organisations with more choice, flexibility and control over the way data is accessed, protected and managed. The net effect – better utilisation of hardware resources and, more importantly, the efficient distribution, availability and use of vital healthcare data.

To learn more about BridgeHead Software, visit www.bridgeheadsoftware.com [5]

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About Healthcare Storage Virtualization (HSV)

Healthcare Storage Virtualization is a technology platform that decouples software applications from the physical storage hardware on which the application data

resides. By separating these applications from the storage device/s, healthcare organisations have a lot more choice, flexibility and control over the way data is accessed, protected and managed. The net effect – better utilisation of hardware resources and, more importantly, the efficient access and use of critical electronic patient data.

HSV allows healthcare organisations to take ownership of their data even though it may reside on disparate software and hardware systems. Being vendor-agnostic, BridgeHead HSV has the ability to interface with any storage platform intelligently, creating better and broader availability of content as well as prohibiting unwanted access and providing comprehensive disaster recovery capability.

In addition, BridgeHead HSV technology offers powerful connectivity to all storage media types. As part of its advanced data protection and archiving features, HSV allows files to be transformed (e.g. compressed and de-duplicated) invisibly in the background, irrespective of media type and functionality, vastly reducing the capacity required across the storage real estate and often delaying the need for hardware upgrades.

Finally, BridgeHead's focus on healthcare lies at the heart of HSV. Consequently, all of the common native standards found within healthcare IT are supported e.g. HL7, DICOM XDS style interfaces etc. This support allows speedy integration of the HSV solution resulting in a more rapid return on investment.

[SOURCE](#) [12]

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Links:

- [1] <http://www.bridgeheadsoftware.com/>
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