Bupa Care Services ensures sustainable future with new WAN

Bupa is an international healthcare group caring for millions of people around the world. In Australia, Bupa is the largest privately managed health insurance group and a major aged care provider operating 50 residential aged care homes, caring for 4,300 elderly residents.

Working with Alzheimer's Australia and international affiliates, Bupa Care Services leads in the provision of dementia care services. Bupa believes in the philosophy of person-centred care, offering the flexibility to meet individual needs in a supportive, home-like environment.
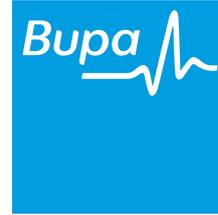
Bupa Care Services's (Bupa) existing wide area network (WAN) was becoming increasingly unreliable. It was slow and not capable of supporting the new applications Bupa needed to roll out to the business. Bupa initiated a project to implement a fully managed, reliable, stable and high performance WAN solution which would enable their overall business strategy.

Bupa sought a partner organisation who could take the strain away from the small internal IT team and that would provide 24/7 WAN support to mirror the fact that aged care facilities operate around the clock.

Bupa also required a platform which would accommodate the implementation of new applications including; Electronic Care Planning, TeleHealth, Unified Communications, plus the Virtualisation of Applications, and compliance with incident reporting guidelines.

Name	Area of operation	Year founded	Number of sites
Bupa Care Services	Aged Care	2008	51

Managed WAN enables enhanced resident care

After a lengthy and comprehensive market review, Enablis and the comUnity® platform, was chosen by Bupa to deliver a converged, fully managed WAN across 50 care homes and a Head Office and DR facility.

The rollout utilised diverse carrier infrastructure to deliver maximum resilience with Quality of Service enabled circuits to allow future deployment of Video (Telehealth applications), voice (SIP) and data under one service contract with 24/7 proactive support and a managed firewall.

Jon Evans, Managing Director, Enablis said, "A reliable, scalable network is fundamental to Bupa's plans to roll out new services to better serve its residents and staff. We have delivered the comUnity Data platform to allow staff to access key information faster to better care for residents".

The aim of Bupa's IT department is to free up staff time from administration to focus on directly caring for residents. A robust and efficient WAN service is vital to achieve this. Enablis' comUnity also supports Bupa's Business Continuity and DR plans, by allowing full remote backup of all systems across the network.

The Enablis team fully manages the solution and provides increased security for Web 2.0 applications and social media apps via deployment of a next generation firewall service, allowing internal IT to focus on other areas. "Overall, our new network has helped free up staff time from administration so they can focus more on directly caring for residents," said Paul Berryman, CIO, Bupa Care Services.

"We're also pleased with the overall resilience and quality of the network performance, our fault rate has dropped from an average of 12 per month to just three in the last quarter, and one of those was a district wide disruption," added Berryman.

Berryman said that the organisation has been able to maintain the same base operational cost for a bandwidth increase of up to five times the speed. "A separate diverse backup network was implemented alongside the replacement of primary network infrastructure - for the same overall cost as the existing legacy network - with 1:1 business grade services rather than ADSL. New services were implemented in parallel to the existing network to ensure a smooth cut over with minimal operational impacts."

Technology Implemented

- **comUnity® Data**
  - **managed WAN**
  - **managed next-generation firewall**

Key Benefits

1	Increased bandwidth to 5 times previous capacity
2	Fault rate decrease from 12/month to 3/quarter
3	Centralised internet for superior performance and user experience
4	Technology platform ready for business improvement projects

Awards

Best Implementation for Facilities over 650 Places/Beds Finalist
Information Technology in Aged Care Award, Aged Care Industry Information Technology Council

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