

Poudre Valley Health System

HEALTHCARE

Poudre Valley Health System (PVHS) – a private, non-profit health services organization based in Fort Collins, Colorado – recently purchased Sophos PureMessage® for its six campuses, one of which is a full services hospital. As its former solution was proving ineffective, PVHS replaced it with PureMessage in order to block viruses, spam, and other email-borne threats from entering the organization’s network.



Business challenge

Founded in 1925, Poudre Valley Health System (PVHS) began as a 40-bed hospital that today provides integrated healthcare services to northern Colorado, southern Wyoming, southwestern Nebraska, and eastern Kansas. The organization was recently named one of the 50 Top US Hospitals for a second consecutive year and one of the nation's 101 Most Wired Hospitals for its effective use of electronic technology in improving patient care. With 2,500 email users, PVHS processes 20,000 emails per day.

“In the past five years, IT has had a greater impact on healthcare than in the cumulative history of either industry,” says Eric Flemister, Technical Supervisor at PVHS. “The only

downside is our increased dependency on technology, which means less tolerance for disruptions.”

Flemister continues, “Network security has always been a priority for us. Our philosophy is based on guarding information as if it were our own, and so that’s where our relationship with Sophos comes in.”

In particular, PVHS faced two IT security issues: the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and the implementation of an Electronic Health Record (EHR), which provides the health system’s staff with access to real-time patient information including data entry, data retrieval, and bedside medication verification.

Key facts

Organization

Poudre Valley Health System

Location

Fort Collins, Colorado
(six sites)

Email traffic

20,000 per day

Number of users

2,500

Solution

PureMessage for UNIX
(anti-spam, anti-virus and extended policy)

“Instead of the 15 hours per week our team spent managing our former solution, they now spend less than one hour administering PureMessage, which means that we have gained 35% more productivity in one full-time position.”

*Eric Flemister
Technical Supervisor
Poudre Valley Health System*

“These components all combine to improve the efficiency of care, and more importantly, patient safety,” says Flemister.

When PVHS's existing email filter system was proving to be ineffective and time consuming, Flemister began researching options to replace it.

“Our email administrator was spending an average of 15 hours per week solving problems associated with messages being incorrectly blocked, as well as virus-laden email. It was becoming difficult to manage, and we were concerned that our system would not meet PVHS's needs as we continued to grow.”

Technology solution

After two and a half months' thorough evaluation of three solutions, PVHS selected Sophos. According to Flemister, “Our first step was to establish a list of selection criteria and perform a broad range search of available alternative solutions. PureMessage was put on our list due to its rich features, manageability and total cost of ownership.”

He continues, “Once the finalists were selected, we tested the products in our environment to see if their real-world experience matched their marketing and sales information. PureMessage was installed on a test network so we could familiarize ourselves with the management tools.”

As part of the evaluation process, PVHS first routed email through PureMessage, then through the organization's existing solution, and finally on to its recipients.

“We were curious to see if PureMessage missed anything that our existing solution would have caught,” comments Flemister. “After we had two weeks' worth of data to substantiate that



PureMessage was working correctly – while nothing had been caught by our existing system – we presented our recommendation to the CIO, removed our existing solution, and started to route all mail solely through PureMessage.”

Business results

PVHS purchased Sophos Pure Message anti-spam, anti-virus and extended policy for the gateway to protect its 2,500 users.

POUDRE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM



“Because one of our top priorities was to simplify ongoing management of the solution, using a single vendor has helped to ease the technological side of system management and increase productivity levels,” says Flemister. “Instead of 15 hours, we now spend less than one hour administering the product, which means that we have gained approximately 35% more productivity in one full-time position.”

Flemister concludes, “Since the implementation of PureMessage, our team is able to quickly release messages blocked as spam, and to date, we haven't had a single call about a virus-infected message.”

To find out how Sophos products can help protect your organization, visit www.sophos.com/products, call toll-free 1-866-866-2802, or email us at nasales@sophos.com.