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Better Patient Services Begin with Connected Care Teams

Enable Healthcare Enterprises to Collaborate Efficiently with FortiVoice Unified Communications

Executive Summary

When lives may be on the line, secure and reliable communication must be a high priority. A unified communications (UC) solution empowers care teams to collaborate and respond to critical patient conditions quickly and efficiently. Unfortunately, relying on ineffective communications tools is a problem across industries. In healthcare, consequences can be quite serious. Poor coordination and communication among staff can result in financial loss and even loss of life.

Unlike many one-size-fits-all phone systems, FortiVoice Unified Communications allows healthcare organizations to tailor their systems to streamline communication processes for operational efficiency. FortiVoice helps simplify modern communications with features that enable increased staff productivity and accountability. The all-inclusive yet affordable solution helps healthcare organizations deliver better customer services and patient experiences without increasing costs.

Business Challenges in Healthcare

The healthcare industry is critically reliant on timely, accurate, and secure communications among care providers, members, and patients. Communication speed and effectiveness directly impact patient safety and outcomes. The complexity of relationships across the network, the array of regulations, and evolving technologies present many challenges for healthcare.

Inefficient communications impact quality patient care

As a healthcare provider, it is crucial to deliver high-quality patient care and safety. Aging phone systems rely on old copper wires through the antiquated public switched telephone network (PSTN). Legacy equipment lacks the flexibility to support modern communications needs and fails to deliver reliable services for efficient staff collaboration.

Security vulnerabilities in patient health information

Always a popular target because they store valuable patient information, healthcare entities continue to see a rise in cyberattacks. Organizations face a hefty penalty for violating compliance regulations when a breach occurs, in addition to compromising confidential patient information. Legacy communications tools often lack security and encryption features, so they are exposed to Session Initiation Protocol attacks and call interceptions that could potentially leak sensitive patient information.

Increasing healthcare costs results in poor patient outcomes

The rising cost of healthcare directly impacts the revenue of healthcare companies. Healthcare spending in the United States is projected to reach $7.1 trillion by 2023.[3] This can be attributed to several factors, such as a growing population, new government policies, and facility upgrades. However, for healthcare entities, maintaining multiple aging communications systems also contributes to rising operating expenses. These expenses must be passed on to the patients. Due to the increasing costs, fewer people visit clinics, and physicians register low revenue growth. This ultimately leads to poor patient outcomes because they are not seeking or receiving the care they need.

About one-third of 23,000 medical lawsuits were attributed to communication failures, resulting in $1.7 billion in malpractice costs and almost 2,000 preventable deaths.[1]

The healthcare industry reported the most expensive data breaches for 13 consecutive years, at an average cost of $10.93 million.[2]

Secure and Reliable Communications from Fortinet

As a leader in cybersecurity, Fortinet provides healthcare enterprises with an end-to-end security ecosystem, from network security to business communications. FortiVoice Unified Communications, combined with FortiFone Internet Protocol (IP) phones, is equipped with cutting-edge technologies to ensure secure, always-on connectivity so care teams can have more productive collaboration, resulting in better patient outcomes.

FortiVoice provides a rich set of calling, conferencing, chat, fax, and more features in one integrated platform. Its intuitive web-based console helps IT administrators simplify phone management across devices and locations and gives them visibility into system performance, thus consuming far less staff time and reducing costs.

FortiFone, working seamlessly with FortiVoice, has a wide selection of phone devices to meet different user needs and budgets from desk and receptionist phones to conference and cordless phones. These IP phones deliver high-definition sound quality and modern design to maximize the user's calling experience. FortiFone Softclient for mobile and desktop helps care teams stay connected anywhere, anytime.

FortiVoice Unified Communications is ideal for healthcare enterprises in centralized and distributed environments. Benefits include:

- **Secure communications:** Built on the latest security and encryption technologies, FortiVoice enterprise systems protect business conversations, safeguard patient and member information, and prevent call interception or SIP attacks.

- **Business continuity:** The FortiVoice Gateway dual network connection and local survivability ensure automatic system failover and always-on phone connectivity, so quality services can be maintained even during internet downtime.

- **Easy deployment and management:** FortiVoice helps reduce the complexity of configuring multiple phone systems with an intuitive web-based console. All FortiFone IP phones are auto-provisioned and work seamlessly with FortiVoice systems. Management across locations and devices can be performed from anywhere.

- **Cost savings:** The all-inclusive FortiVoice solution with simple and affordable pricing reduces costs without dropping communication quality. There are no extra feature or per-user costs.

- **Enterprise-grade features:** FortiVoice enables every user to collaborate easily and efficiently without switching to different communications tools, featuring integrated HD voice, conferencing, chat, fax, and more. Employees can enjoy secure and clear conversations with staff, patients, or members, regardless of their locations or devices.

- **End-to-end protection:** Fortinet delivers a comprehensive security ecosystem for end-to-end protection. Recognized as a leader in cybersecurity by Gartner and other industry analysts, Fortinet is a proven vendor with a broad portfolio of solutions ranging from comprehensive network security to business communications.

Conclusion

Fast-evolving industry regulations, technological innovations, and patient expectations create a new environment for hospitals and medical practices that requires secure and effective communications.

The FortiVoice all-inclusive, affordable business communications solution provides excellent savings for healthcare enterprises of any size. With integrated calling, conferencing, chat, fax, and mobility, FortiVoice helps healthcare professionals do more with less. Flexibility in the solution enables each office to customize for unique business needs and optimize for operational efficiency. FortiVoice Unified Communications enables healthcare organizations to provide quality care promptly, lowering costs while increasing patient satisfaction.

[1] Effects of Poor Communication in Healthcare, The HIPPA Journal, December 2023.

[2] Cost of a Data Breach Report, IBM Security, 2023.

[3] National Health Expenditure Projections, 2022–2031: Growth to Stabilize Once the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Ends, Health Affairs, June 2023.

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