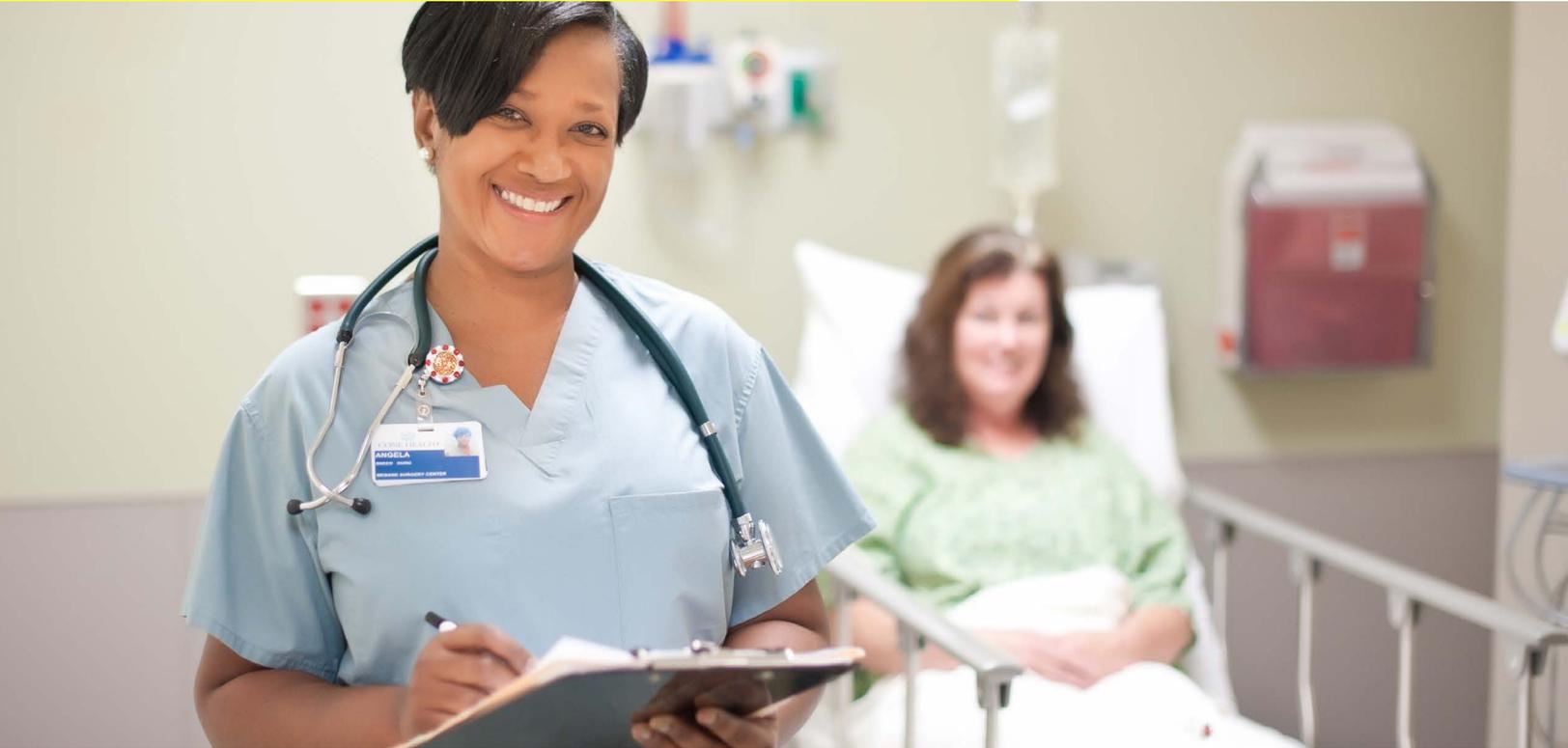# Cone Health advances care by saving millions on storing patient records

∩ NetApp

Powered by NetApp, Epic on Azure is a highly-available and cost-effective solution for Epic customers.

Innovations in health care delivery are the hope of every patient and medical professional. Innovations in health care management and delivery? They're often much slower to materialize, but they're no less important to advancing quality of care. Every dollar saved in the back office is a dollar that can be shifted to the patient experience.

Cone Health is a health care system in North Carolina consisting of five hospitals, four medical centers, urgent care centers, and affiliated doctor and specialist locations. To maintain and make available electronic medical records (EMR) for millions of people throughout their lives is a huge undertaking that generates enormous data volumes.

Cone Health is furthering its commitment to health care leadership by establishing new best practices in data management. Using the Microsoft Azure cloud and NetApp, the health care system is saving millions on its disaster recovery infrastructure for EMR without sacrificing availability or performance.

CONE HEALTH®

> **Up to $1 million in savings annually**

> "Savings of $1M annually moving Epic DR to Azure by leveraging NetApp has been key to our ability to meet new demands for quality care and to pivot resources during uncertain times. Our utmost in data cost reduction and performance is being asked of us and that is exactly what we're delivering."
>
> **Doug McMillian, CTO**
> Cone Health

Patient data is a hospital's lifeblood

EMR is the data that runs a health care system. Patient records must be available with no interruption. They must be accurate. They must be kept throughout the life of the patient. Every visit, every procedure, every result, must follow the patient.
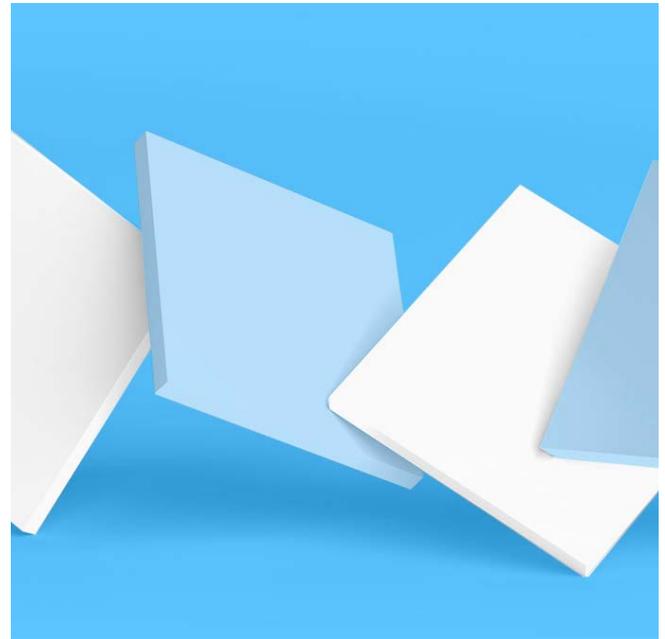
Like the majority of hospital systems in the United States, Cone Health uses Epic software for this gigantic task. Also like most hospital systems, Cone has invested heavily in on-premises data centers for application and data management. Necessary disaster recovery investments mean complete duplication of these huge data volumes. The costs are significant.

To continue a digital transformation that will improve quality and lower the costs of care, Cone is moving Epic workloads to the Microsoft Azure cloud powered by NetApp. For CIO Ben Patel, the goal is "to truly move from clinical care to the whole person care and precision health."

Partnerships advance innovation

The hospital system has been a NetApp customer for more than 5 years and has most of its Epic installation on NetApp technologies. As a foundational data management technology, NetApp gives Patel the confidence to pursue more aggressive plans for improving cost efficiency. The disaster recovery data was the first to move to Azure after 2 years of extensive testing and a fully replicated off-site host. Cooperation with Azure and NetApp was crucial to this effort.

"How do we come up with a strategy and partnerships with partners like Microsoft Azure and NetApp, to be able to replicate our data from an on-premises infrastructure, as well as up to the cloud, so that we could make that shift in a timely fashion without impacting our business users?" Patel asked.

Together, Azure and NetApp significantly reduce the impact of maintaining those records in duplicate at exponential rates of growth.

Speed and savings

A large EMR application refresh can take months to achieve with an on-premises infrastructure. The physical boxes, the networking, the configuration and testing required eat up time and are shortly eclipsed by new demands. The Azure cloud is faster to scale and more cost effective. The organization's savings approach $1 million annually.

According to Patel, "When you start to look at cloud technologies and what we could do differently, we could actually use infrastructure as code to spin up that entire same environment within a matter of minutes and hours versus 6 months."

That's time and money better spent elsewhere. For Patel, it makes possible true innovation in medicine. Robotic automation, telehealth and remote medicine, self-service portals, and other initiatives hinge on EMR.

"What is critical for us from an innovation standpoint is to be able to leverage cloud," Patel said. "We can then use artificial intelligence and machine learning services to quickly get into the patient records and develop those insights. Those insights can be in real time and delivered to our providers, so that we can better serve our patients and provide better outcomes. At the same time, we can bend the cost curve."

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About NetApp

In a world full of generalists, NetApp is a specialist. We're focused on one thing, helping your business get the most out of your data. NetApp brings the enterprise-grade data services you rely on into the cloud, and the simple flexibility of cloud into the data center. Our industry-leading solutions work across diverse customer environments and the world's biggest public clouds.

As a cloud-led, data-centric software company, only NetApp can help build your unique data fabric, simplify and connect your cloud, and securely deliver the right data, services and applications to the right people—anytime, anywhere. To learn more, visit www.netapp.com

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