

# CASE STUDY: CANCER CARE NORTHWEST

## **BUILDING A MORE ROBUST AND FLEXIBLE NETWORK: IT Redesign from the Bottom Up**

Cancer Care Northwest is the Inland Northwest's premier cancer center, providing an integrated approach to the diagnosis, treatment and healing of cancer and blood-related diseases.

Cancer Care Northwest is made up of 29 physicians, nine nurse practitioners and physician assistants, and more than 250 support staff prepared to help give you the best treatment for your cancer. They serve patients at eight locations in the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene metropolitan area, along with five outreach clinics throughout Washington state.

### **THE CHALLENGE**

#### **Rebuilding network infrastructure for the long haul**

"Back in 2012," according to CCNW CIO Carol O'Leary, "network resources were at a critical overload due to company growth and neglect of IT infrastructure. CCNW's computer systems were experiencing downtime on a regular basis. We had a major system crash and unfortunately, found out the company engaged to backup our data had backup failures that had gone unnoticed. Our physicians recognized the importance of investing in the company's infrastructure."

#### **Network redesign from the bottom up**

Cancer Care Northwest started with a network redesign strategy from the bottom up. It began with a replacement of their network infrastructure, then moved from an expensive traditional PBX phone system to a Cisco voice over IP solution. "It allowed us to centralize our phone operators," said O'Leary. "Our voice technology is scalable to allow for future growth, and gives us flexibility to communicate with staff when they rotate from one location to another. In fact, we built our new Spokane Valley integrated cancer center without traditional phone wiring. We love our video phones. They allow our staff to have face to face communication no matter which CCNW location they are at."

#### **A technology partner that "gets it"**

"I've worked with other technology partners in my healthcare career," says O'Leary. "Nuvodia's affiliation with Inland Imaging is an important relationship for us. If anyone understands the resources necessary for pushing large images and the importance of system availability and performance, it is Nuvodia. They get healthcare."

### **THE SOLUTION**

Nuvodia began their relationship with Cancer Care Northwest by taking on a couple of smaller projects. "The projects were completed on time, on budget, and it was a good working relationship," says O'Leary. "They understand disruption of service for patient care is unacceptable. Our patients are under enough stress. We need to ensure our physicians and patients have timely, secure access to diagnostic imaging, pathology, and lab results to make informed decisions regarding their care."

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Asked what she enjoyed most about her relationship with Nuvodia, O'Leary cited the following factors:

- **A high level of expertise available** — “I can talk directly with an expert on the subject matter when I need them.”
- **Honesty, character, and professionalism** — “Nuvodia is a true partner — they are an extension of the values of our company.”
- **A willingness and ability to solve problems with the right solution** — “They have stepped up on multiple occasions to assist on projects with short timelines.”

## THE RESULT

According to O'Leary, the results have been commendable and the relationship continues to grow. “I have access to knowledgeable resources willing to work with innovative technologies. In October 2014, CCNW entered an agreement with Providence Healthcare and Kootenai Health, to be the provider of radiation services. We had 90 days to network four radiation sites located on two disparate networks. Radiation treatments at CDA and Post Falls transitioned from Kootenai Health to CCNW in January of 2015. 30 days later, radiation treatments at Sacred Heart Medical Center and Holy Family Hospital were delivered on the Cancer Care Northwest network by CCNW physicians. Patients were not aware of the major shift of services or changes in the delivery of their treatments as it was a transparent and successful transition.”