“Through the strategic use of RSA technology, we have been able to accelerate our plan for an integrated regional health information organization. The Keystone Health Information Exchange pilot, secured by RSA® Access Manager and RSA Federated Identity Manager, allows Emergency Departments within participating hospitals to share patient health information in real time. Based on initial responses from physicians, we expect this system to reduce time spent searching for information from other organizations and reduce the number of duplicate tests and procedures performed. This minimizes delays in treatment, which can be frustrating, and improves the patient experience.”

DAVID YOUNG, IT DIRECTOR, GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM

Founded in 1915, Geisinger Health System is a physician-led healthcare system, dedicated to healthcare, education, research, and service, spanning 41 counties in Pennsylvania and serving 2.6 million people. It has received national recognition as a model for best-practice health services delivery and its physicians have been listed in The Best Doctors in America. To learn more, please visit: www.geisinger.org.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

Geisinger Health System is a nationally recognized leader in healthcare IT, specifically the adoption of electronic patient records to improve patient care. It has an extensive network of departmental applications and web portals serving staff, affiliated physicians, patients, and health-plan members.

Geisinger has long used access management software to provide physicians and patients with single sign-on access to clinical applications as well as authentication tokens to provide additional secure access for employees and vendor partners.

To further improve the quality and safety of patient care, Geisinger put in place a program to integrate and extend access to its network of healthcare IT systems. It recently created a Regional Health Integrated Organization (RHIO) connected via The Keystone Health Information Exchange (KeyHIE™).
The aim of KeyHIE is to allow clinicians at some 53 rural Pennsylvania hospitals to easily share patient data. The first phase of this project is a pilot implementation involving the Emergency Departments (ED) at Geisinger Medical Center, Shamokin Hospital, and Bloomsburg Hospital, all located in north central Pennsylvania.

**SOLUTION**

Geisinger selected RSA Access Manager and RSA Federated Identity Manager to manage user access across the three hospitals. This enterprise-ready solution enables organizations to securely exchange identities across network domains, providing end users with secure access to multiple external applications with a single identity and log on.

The system allows doctors and nurses in the Geisinger, Shamokin, and Bloomsburg emergency departments to access critical health data of each other’s patients in real time. Using RSA technology, Geisinger has been able to mitigate the risk of internal security breaches through centralized management and control of user authentication and authorization privileges.

Geisinger has also rolled out RSA Adaptive Authentication to provide affiliated and referring physicians with secure access to patients’ electronic medical records. The solution’s risk-based authentication technology conducts a risk assessment behind the scenes, ensuring minimal inconvenience to the user.

A unique risk score is assigned to each activity, and users are only challenged when an activity is identified as moderate or high risk and/or an organizational policy is violated.

David Young, IT Director at Geisinger Health System, says: “We were particularly attracted by the way RSA Adaptive Authentication offers layers of security in addition to the standard user name and password, but without inconveniencing the user. It is ideal for clinicians working in a busy and often pressured hospital and clinic environment.”

**RESULTS**

Sharing medical records across remote healthcare locations enables treatment teams to improve the accuracy and speed of diagnoses on patients visiting the ED. It also helps reduce costs and improve patient satisfaction by preventing duplicate testing while the ability to view patient medical information in real time means there is less paper in the ED, minimizing transcription errors.

The productivity of the ED is increased and the ability to make more informed clinical decisions reassures the clinicians on duty. Ultimately, all these benefits improve the level of patient care, quality, and safety at KeyHIE-participating hospitals, helping build greater trust between staff, patients, and partnering hospitals.

From a business perspective, centralized management of security and policy controls reduces healthcare costs and ensures regulatory compliance. By providing role-based access control and detailed audit trails, RSA Access Manager and RSA Federated Identity Manager help Geisinger meet the requirements of HIPAA’s privacy and security regulations. Thanks to RSA Adaptive Authentication, Geisinger is able to offer its affiliated and referring physicians secure access to patient records via the GeisingerConnect portal, thereby further facilitating the sharing of patient information and improving patient care. Young says: “Providing these groups with access to a patient’s electronic medical records will also help to reduce the number of duplicate tests, which speeds up treatment and improves the patient experience.”