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— Jill Wojcik, Technical Services Manager, Maimonides Medical Center

## Maimonides Medical Center supports HIPAA compliance with tight control of network access from WebEx Support Center.



### INDUSTRY

Healthcare

### WEBEX APPLICATIONS

Support Center

### SUMMARY

Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY needed a secure, auditable way to control remote vendors' access to its IT infrastructure. The solution needed to enable remote upgrade and maintenance activity, while protecting patient data per HIPAA regulations. WebEx Support Center provided a standardized method for 24/7 vendor access that is highly secure and permits complete vendor activity tracking.

### ABOUT MAIMONIDES

#### Line of Business

Hospital and academic medical center

#### Headquarters

Brooklyn, New York

#### Number of Employees

5,000+

#### WebEx Customer Since 2005

Maimonides Medical Center is a non-profit, non-sectarian academic hospital in Brooklyn, NY, known for its many contributions to medical progress through clinical and laboratory research. The Medical Center delivers a broad range of primary and sub-specialty services to patients in the Greater New York metropolitan area. Clinicians and administrators at Maimonides embrace a philosophy of leveraging advanced information technology to enhance efficiency, improve patient care and reduce medical errors. In fact, for 2005, Maimonides was named one of the nation's 100 "Most Wired" hospitals and one of the nation's 25 "Most Wireless," by Hospitals & Health Networks, a journal of the American Hospital Association.

#### The Challenge

To meet their growing demand for advanced information technology, Maimonides worked with multiple vendors to develop its IT infrastructure. Consequently, Technical Services Manager Jill Wojcik and her team needed to address a serious issue with these vendor partners—compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA is a federal law that mandates security and privacy measures for handling medical records. Under HIPAA, medical providers must thoroughly track all contact with patient data to ensure its proper protection. However, Maimonides was struggling to achieve a secure and effective method

for auditing access to its servers by the outside service vendors. During the vendors' troubleshooting and maintenance activities, patient data could potentially be exposed. The Technical Services team needed a foolproof way to control and track unique vendor sessions that sometimes occurred multiple times daily during system upgrades.

#### The Solution

Wojcik's team set to work on solving these vendor support challenges. In keeping with Maimonides' strong technology commitment, they chose a best-of-breed approach to solution development. They began with an assessment of the different remote support tools that their vendors were using to see which ones were valuable, and which they could eliminate.

After selecting WebEx Support Center, Maimonides notified all of its vendors of the new requirement to use WebEx to service them. Vendors now needed to fill in an online form requesting network access. Support Center then generated an access code based on the request, which Wojcik's team used to "unlock" the system at the requested service time. Support Center consistently logged all activity, down to which servers were accessed, what files touched, and the types of modifications made. Using this method, Maimonides now had strong security and reliable activity logs to see into all



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3rd party actions in their network. Since access could be requested 24/7, WebEx Support Center enabled Wojcik’s team to pre-set access permissions, enabling vendors to perform their work without Maimonides’ staff having to be on site.

Wojcik commented on the value Support Center delivered “Previously, I had to struggle to see who touched what, how they got in, and what they did. Now, WebEx gives every vendor their own account, so we have clear visibility into all remote access and actions within our network. No other vendor was able to provide us with this level of flexibility to create logs or track activity. We found WebEx to be much more flexible.”

While Maimonides’ mandate certainly required a change for its vendors, converting them to the new system was relatively smooth. Once the vendors could see the ease of the solution, and understood that the WebEx web-based application required no technology installation or pur-

chase on their part, they could comfortably adopt Support Center into their support methodologies. Some were already familiar with or using WebEx products in other areas of their businesses.

#### The Results

After just a few months since initial implementation, Wojcik already sees the value in the WebEx solution. Keeping external vendors in compliance has helped her team to be more efficient, because they’re no longer struggling to keep track of remote access. Maimonides is also leveraging the Support Center session—recording feature to see some of the actual activity occurring in particular vendors’ sessions, giving them an “extra pair of eyes” to monitor the specifics. As Wojcik comments, “Our choice of WebEx is in keeping with the overall Maimonides philosophy of using technology to solve problems proactively. We’re working with a technology leader to address our HIPAA compliance. We’ve got more control, and that’s made our support lives easier.”

#### The Future

Wojcik anticipates implementing the WebEx phone authentication feature in the near future. This will save even more time by enabling Maimonides to automatically provide session-specific access codes to vendors. Also, this will relieve the need for the Technical Services team to unlock the server prior to vendor access, and re-lock it when they’re through.

Wojcik would also like to expand their Help Desk use of WebEx Support Center, from the second tier escalation team to the front line Help Desk staff. She explains, “We’re looking at a model for delivering remote viewing to first line support, while keeping a handle on usage. This will save us time and energy.”

With Technical Services’ many responsibilities, Wojcik welcomes the confidence and resource savings that WebEx brings to their operations. “There are other things we have to give our attention to, and WebEx Support Center allows us to do that,” she says. “It just makes my job easier.”

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Maimonides Medical Center required a secure method to allow its vendors remote access to its IT infrastructure for upgrades and maintenance, while protecting patient data per HIPAA requirements.
- WebEx Support Center gave them a standardized interface that provided tight control of third party access, and the ability to track all vendor actions on their systems.
- The Maimonides Technical Services team now has increased both confidence and bandwidth from the operational efficiencies gained through using WebEx.