

# Case Study: Meadville Medical Center



## Meadville Medical Center deploys Proofpoint to ensure HIPAA compliance and protect patient data

### HIPAA provided spark to secure outbound email

Meadville Medical Center is a community medical center located in Meadville, Pa., about 90 miles north of Pittsburgh. The hospital has a staff of more than 1,300 professionals to provide high quality medical care to patients.

As a health care facility, Meadville Medical Center must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Among the HIPAA regulations are provisions mandating that hospitals secure protected health information (PHI) sent via email, such as patient reports, diagnosis numbers and other personal information.

An audit of its email channel revealed several flaws and potential HIPAA violations. The encryption tool that IT created for departments was found to be cumbersome, so some users occasionally opted to not use it. The audit proved to not only be a learning experience for IT, but it was also a learning experience for the staff who became more educated on how to properly send confidential information.

“That audit was a real eye-opener for us,” said Jeri Sample, systems administrator of Meadville Medical Center. “The possibility of the HIPAA violations quickly justified the cost of buying a solution to handle the problem.”

Meadville Medical Center evaluated several solutions that would let it identify and encrypt any emails containing PHI. After narrowing down its list to solutions from KODAK Secure Email Services (SES) and Proofpoint, Meadville selected the Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway, because it offered better performance, included six managed dictionaries of healthcare codes and terms that SES did not, and required almost zero ongoing maintenance.

**“The Proofpoint support team has just been incredibly responsive to our requests and has worked with us to really perfect our deployment. Most companies out there could really take lessons from Proofpoint on customer service and support.”**

**Jeri Sample**  
Systems Administrator, Meadville Medical Center

### Business challenge

Meadville Medical Center elected to upgrade its messaging security systems in order to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The medical center used email as a regular communications channel, but needed to implement more stringent security in order to prevent patient data or other sensitive information from improperly leaving the network via outbound email. During an audit of its outbound email, the medical center found several potential HIPAA violations.

### Proofpoint solution

Meadville Medical Center deployed the Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway™ appliance to protect its outbound email channel. Using the Proofpoint Regulatory Compliance™ and Proofpoint Secure Messaging™ modules, Meadville is able to scan its email for protected health information (PHI). Once Proofpoint detects PHI in an email, that email is automatically encrypted before being sent out.

### Results achieved

With Proofpoint, Meadville Medical Center is able to automatically identify and encrypt more than 100 emails each month that contain PHI. In the process, Proofpoint has dramatically reduced the amount of time that the IT staff must spend investigating email infractions.

## Case Study: Meadville Medical Center

### Proofpoint provides a secure channel for outbound email

The Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway is an appliance that delivers the industry's most complete and effective security for enterprise messaging infrastructures. Meadville Medical Center uses both the Proofpoint Regulatory Compliance and Proofpoint Secure Messaging modules to protect its outbound email.

The Proofpoint Regulatory Compliance module scans outgoing email messages for PHI, such as patient data and procedure codes, as well as other personal information including social security and credit card numbers. Once emails containing PHI have been identified, the Proofpoint Secure Messaging module, which is powered by Voltage IBE (identity based encryption) technology, encrypts them before they are sent outside the hospital.

### Proofpoint easy to install and manage

For Meadville Medical Center, one of the most important features in a messaging security solution was that it had to be easy to use and require very little administration.

**Proofpoint Products Deployed**  
Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway  
Proofpoint Regulatory Compliance  
Proofpoint Secure Messaging

Sample says that's exactly what Proofpoint delivered. She found the Proofpoint appliance was incredibly easy to install, it worked right out of the box and it requires very little ongoing maintenance.

"In terms of policies, we only had to set up a few rules to identify and capture email unique to our environment," said Sample.

"Other than that, Proofpoint already had all the rules and dictionaries in place pertaining to HIPAA and other sensitive information."

Sample also says that Proofpoint provides superior customer support, far above what she would expect from any vendor. "The Proofpoint support team has just been incredibly responsive to our requests and has worked with us to really perfect our deployment. Most companies out there could really take lessons from Proofpoint on customer service and support." ➔

### About Meadville Medical Center

Meadville Medical Center is a community hospital located in Meadville, Pennsylvania. The hospital is continually working to make sure that our facilities are up-to-date or state-of-the-art and meet community needs. It is a leader in healthcare in northwestern Pennsylvania, with the newest technology, including the latest generation of ultrasound, CT and MRI technology. Meadville Medical Center has a medical staff of over 100, which consists of 37 medical/surgical specialties, with an extensive primary care foundation.

### About Proofpoint, Inc.

Proofpoint provides messaging security solutions for large enterprises to stop spam, protect against email viruses, ensure compliance with corporate policies and regulations and defend against leaks of confidential and proprietary information via email and other network protocols. The company's flagship products, the Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway™ and Proofpoint Protection Server® provide future-proof messaging security using Proofpoint MLX™ technology, an advanced machine learning system developed by Proofpoint scientists and engineers.

©2006 Proofpoint, Inc. All rights reserved. Proofpoint, Proofpoint Protection Server, Proofpoint Messaging Security Gateway, Proofpoint Regulatory Compliance, Proofpoint Spam Detection, Proofpoint Secure Messaging, Proofpoint Virus Protection, MLX, MLX Engine, and Dynamic Update Service are trademarks of Proofpoint, Inc. Product and company names listed are trademarks or trade names of their respective companies. 7/06