

## INDUSTRY BRIEF

# Enabling Healthcare After a Disaster

If there is any sector of the economy that must recover quickly from a disaster, it is health care. Retaining the capacity to help the sick or injured is the core of its mission and is even more important – and yet more challenging – in the chaotic aftermath of a disaster.

In order to provide quality care, providers need timely (if not immediate) access to medical records. This includes everything from written progress notes to computerized lab results and medical images such as X-rays or CAT scans. In the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster, the physical facilities which hosted these records may be damaged or destroyed. Patients displaced by the emergency may seek treatment far from their usual doctor or hospital, making the search for their records even harder.

A robust disaster recovery plan is essential to ensuring health care providers can perform their jobs when they're most needed. Both in the planning and implementation of a disaster recovery plan, healthcare providers need the support of a trusted, nationwide communications solutions provider who can provide reliable service under the worst of conditions. AT&T has the experience, skills and depth of trained people and technology to provide that support.

### Disaster Planning

To be effective, a recovery plan must be in place and have been practiced multiple times before a disaster hits. Video, audio and Web conferencing allows all interested parties to agree on and update disaster response plans without the time and expense of traveling to a central site.

AT&T's audio, video and Web conferencing services make it easier for health care officials to coordinate with other public and private officials to create, practice and update emergency response plans.

### Telecommunications and Network Recovery

In the wake of an emergency, health care providers must be able to find staff members, determine their availability and relay emergency instructions to them.

AT&T's wireless voice and data network, the largest in the country, provides audio and text messaging capabilities that can be used to quickly alert and provide emergency instructions to caregivers, first responders and other key players.

AT&T's Network Disaster Recovery (NDR) team regularly conducts recovery exercises several times a year throughout the United States to ensure that communications are restored quickly for the company's government,

### Key Benefits

**AT&T telecommunications and disaster recovery solutions help health care providers to:**

- **Plan and coordinate disaster recovery plans with other public and private officials**
- **Find doctors, nurses and other staff and relay emergency instructions to them**
- **Protect critical data and keep it accessible in the event of a disaster**
- **Restore information systems in a secure, remote environment**

business, and consumer clients if a disaster damages or destroys part of its network.

### Seamless Access to Records

In order to provide continuous, quality care after a disaster, health care providers need data protection solutions that preserve critical data to ensure it's always available.

AT&T StorageConnect Service<sup>SM</sup> provides a storage transport service for vital data protection functions such as networked storage replication, tape pipelining, tape-backup and data recovery. AT&T StorageConnect Service<sup>SM</sup>



is a fully managed, flexible, multi-location solution that allows hospitals, clinics and other healthcare providers to balance risk, cost and performance.

AT&T's Remote Vault Service is an easy-to-use service that backs up data from PCs and servers using a facility's broadband Internet connection. After the data has been securely transmitted to an offsite location, it can be recovered from any Web-enabled PC, speeding data recovery from locations not affected by the disaster.

### Remote Recovery

When a flood, hurricane, fire or other disaster destroys a health care provider's data center, it may need not only the lost data but a new physical facility to host its entire IT infrastructure.

AT&T's System Recovery solution allows organizations to recover distributed systems, PC-based servers and/or mainframe servers at AT&T facilities and supports more than 30 current and legacy platforms, as well sophisticated storage and network capabilities.

AT&T Enterprise Hosting Services offer a rich portfolio of flexible hosting solutions to help ensure uninterrupted access and improved performance of critical health care data and applications.

AT&T's Enterprise Recovery Service offers customers flexible, subscription-based recovery solutions – from hot sites to mobile recovery units that address businesses' most critical operations and assets, including call centers, mainframes, operating systems, storage systems, PCs and local area networks.

Security Technologies (2007 vs. 2006 Results)



Source: 18th Annual HIMSS Leadership Survey, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society®

### AT&T At Work: Assuring Reliable Access to Patient Information

Since its founding more than 75 years ago, the philosophy of the Summit Medical Group in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey has been “one patient, one medical record.” Maintaining all the information about a patient in one record gives primary and specialty care physicians a complete and holistic view of a patient’s medical needs and thus allow them to provide better care. But when that single record exist only in digital form, it’s absolutely critical that the group’s network remain up even in the wake of an equipment failure or natural disaster.

The need for disaster recovery is one reason why the 125-physician medical group chose a high-speed ACCU-Ring® Service network from AT&T when it replaced its older point-to-point network. “Our primary need always came down to reliability and redundancy,” says Leslie Stanaback, the group’s director of information services. Other network designs “raised concerns about a single point of failure,” she says. “But our AT&T team offered us a network that was routed through two separate central offices, which other vendors couldn’t do.” It means the Summit Medical Group network ring can remain operational even in the unlikely event of a major failure in the public network. “For us,” said Stanaback, “the self-healing capabilities of the ring design were paramount. We need to be up and running.”

The network includes diverse network entrances and exits, which allows for more than one route for traffic in and out of one of the clinic’s buildings. “If an access line is disrupted in an excavation accident, let’s say, the location isn’t cut off from the network,” said Stanaback. “Traffic simply goes out the other way.”

Summit Medical Group also set up a disaster recovery center in a separate facility a few miles from their main campus, connected to all other sites by their fiber network. This Network Attached Storage (NAS) site provides literally terabytes of storage capacity to duplicate all key files, images, and data. It allows for almost instant fail-over for their main patient care systems over their metro network. “If our main servers were ever unavailable for some reason,” said Stanaback, “we can automatically switch to our back-ups with virtually no loss to our physicians or their patients.”

That assurance allows the group to focus on what’s most important: Providing the highest possible level of care to its patients.

For more information contact your AT&T Representative or visit us at [www.att.com/healthcare](http://www.att.com/healthcare).

