Peninsula Health ensure regional hospitals are Covid-19 ready, thanks to Azure

Peninsula Health cover a number of health facilities and hospitals in the Mornington Peninsula and surrounding areas. Their charge includes Frankston Hospital, The Mornington Centre and Golf Links Road Rehabilitation Centre. Peninsula Health covers an area of approximately 850 square kilometres and a population of 300,000 people which can increase by around 100,000 in peak tourism seasons.
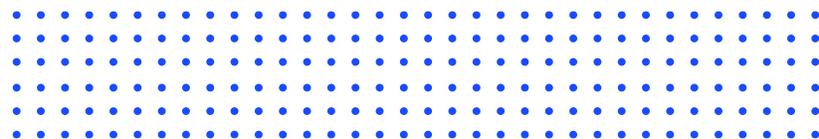
Logicalis and Peninsula Health had been discussing the move to public cloud for a number of months when the COVID-19 pandemic began to emerge. As the organisation started to prepare for the worst-case scenario demonstrated by countries likes Spain and Italy, it was obvious to the group they would need to make some drastic and quick decisions to keep their facilities running.

The requirements for Peninsula Health were simple. Help us get 1,000 back office staff working remotely, in a secure fashion and in a way that least impacts their normal BAU way of working.

This also allowed them to free up and repurpose some space within their facilities to cope with the potential demand of a pandemic.

There were a number of challenges with delivering this this scenario:

1. Peninsula Health were a traditional on premise organisation in every sense of the word, as an organisation conducting all of its services onsite, all of the back office staff tended to work from the facility as well, so remote working wasn't something that had been tried and tested at scale. In addition to this, all of their infrastructure was also on premise which made it impossible to support so many staff concurrently logging in via VPN

2. The second challenge was around the security of patient data with back office staff working remotely. It was simply not an option to have any breaches of security with patient data that could have been caused by just letting staff log on remotely without proper process and protocol being adhered to

3. The final challenge was time, given the only way to support 1,000 workers concurrently was using the capacity, flexibility and scale of public Cloud. Logicalis had 2 weeks to set up and deploy a production ready cloud platform to support the 1,000 staff, which happened just before the government lockdown was upon them

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Solution

The solution proposed needed to be as close to the Citrix desktop environment that the Peninsula Health employees were used to as there was no time for additional training or familiarity to get them up to speed.

When Logicalis got the call, mid-March, they stood up a proof of concept (POC) within a week, demonstrating our recommended solution of Citrix Cloud on Microsoft Azure using Logicalis's production ready cloud platform capabilities. The full deployment took place a week later for 1,000 staff members without a single hiccup.

Logicalis was able to do this at speed and scale by leaning on the Cloud maturity model that has served many organisations including the Department of Health and Human Services. On top of this, we also implemented Azure multi-factor authentication to ensure patient data was appropriately secured.

The result so far

All of the staff at Peninsula Health are working remotely with safe, secure access to everything they need, something that couldn't have happened without a carefully considered plan on how the security of patient data and the hospital operations could be guaranteed with minimal disruption.

The organisation had to jump in at the deep end and place their trust in Logicalis to take them from zero Cloud to production ready for their entire back office operation in 2 weeks.

Who knows what the future holds for workers across Australia including the Peninsula Health staff, but this crisis has proven people can be effective on the go and potentially, there will be less requirements for office space within hospitals and buildings and more people will continue to work remotely, delivering cost savings and productivity gains back to business and the people who work there.

"Without Logicalis' ability to propose and deliver a viable solution for secure remote working in the speed we needed to act, our hospitals could not have opened its doors, which could have resulted in lives lost in our regional community."

Warren