



Industry

Healthcare

Daily Use

- Telemedicine
- Access to experts
- Medical education
- Distance training
- Remote site communications

Solution

- Polycom® Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) 5000
- 10 Polycom® standards-based videoconferencing systems
- Two Polycom® Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) solutions

Results and Benefits

- Travel cost reductions resulting in savings exceeding six figures in past three to five years
- Improvements in productivity and employee retention resulting from reduced travel and commute times
- Improved quality of care in facilities underserved by specialists and primary care clinicians
- Achieved levels of safety, efficacy and cost effectiveness necessary to broaden company's footprint into private sector healthcare

Powered by Polycom, Clinical e-Health Solutions Has a Prescription for Success

Clinical e-Health Solutions is a subsidiary of America Service Group Inc. The Brentwood, Tennessee-based parent company is a leading provider of healthcare services for state and local governments throughout the United States. A telemedicine pioneer, the company has delivered centralized clinical care to government clients for 15 years.

As a new business unit, Clinical e-Health Solutions is chartered with leveraging the best practices that America Service Group has established with government clients and bringing them to the private sector. In particular, the company is focused on facilities that care for patients in communities with access to care challenges.

The company's long track record working with government at multiple levels has afforded it a unique and valuable perspective on a healthcare market seeking ways to manage costs without sacrificing quality of care.

"On a national scale, we're seeing specialists gravitating toward larger cities, and this is causing a shortage of primary care providers in areas that, while not quite remote, are increasingly underserved in terms of healthcare," says Carl Keldie, M.D., Chief Medical Officer for Clinical e-Health Solutions. "This has created an opportunity for us to apply the telemedicine expertise we've developed over the past 15 years for government clients, and make them available to commercial healthcare providers."

Through its telemedicine network, ASG through its subsidiaries provides healthcare for approximately 180,000 patients in 23 states. The services the company provides include:

- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Utilization Management
- Training and Education

Disease Management

Within its clinical practice, the company's staff of 15 clinicians primarily focuses on treating hepatitis and HIV, along with offering psychiatry and primary care services. Clinical e-Health Solutions also provides oncology evaluation and treatment recommendations that meet National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology™, the recognized standard for clinical policy in oncology. That, says Keldie, will further help the company serve more private sector clients.

Standardizing on Polycom

To meet the demands of its expanding care network, ASG had to invest in its telemedicine infrastructure – which since 2007 has been built on video communication solutions from Polycom.

"We looked at the major vendors in this space," recalls Dr. Keldie. "Polycom easily met our criteria for compatibility, scalability and ease of deployment. It was also clear that Polycom would work with us as a partner, so we made the strategic choice to standardize exclusively on Polycom solutions for our telemedicine network."

"In the past three to five years, we've realized savings that exceed six figures. Our Polycom systems leverage our clinician expertise every time we use them."

Carl Keldie, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Clinical e-Health Solutions, a subsidiary of America Service Group Inc.

The company initially purchased several Polycom® VSX® 3000 videoconferencing systems in 2007. Ideal for use in doctors' offices and medical care facilities, space-efficient VSX 3000 systems feature a 17-inch LCD monitor that can double as a PC display when not in use for video calls. The system incorporates Polycom Pro-Motion™ interlaced video, which provides smooth, natural motion and sharp, clear images for optimal viewing. Superior audio is delivered via stereo microphones and speakers.

Today, Clinical e-Health Solutions operates a network of 10 VSX 3000 systems. As its video end points have multiplied, the company chose to deploy the Polycom® Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) 5000, which allows Dr. Keldie's team to centrally manage their visual communication activities and resources, speed deployment, and ease integration with existing applications and resources. And the Polycom® Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) 5300 solution allows all members of Clinical e-Health Solutions' widely dispersed team of clinicians to easily, transparently and securely call anyone else on the network.

Another advantage: Polycom's standards-based architecture allows Clinical e-Health Solutions to interface with a legacy non-Polycom laptop solution. "The fact that Polycom interoperates with other solutions is a significant advantage for us," says Keldie.

Leveraging video to expand the business

It was a 2007 American Telemedicine Association meeting in Nashville that gave Dr. Keldie the idea to take his company's government-based healthcare services to commercial clients.

"I was able to see how several trends were converging to create an opportunity that made perfect sense for a company that knows how to cost-effectively deliver telemedicine while still maintaining high standards of care," says Dr. Keldie, who immediately saw a need for primary care expertise among the fast-growing network of clinics that provide both specialty and primary care healthcare to consumers who often lack access to care. "You have a growing need in these facilities for more fundamental medicine, such as managing diabetes, hypertension and asthma. Our Polycom telemedicine network allows us to leverage a pool of primary clinicians who enable these facilities to provide that level of care, without forcing those physicians to physically commute to that location."

An ROI exceeding six figures

Eliminating that commute has been key to helping America Services Group and its Clinical e-Health Solutions subsidiary cut operating costs on an impressive scale.

"In the past three to five years, we've realized savings that exceed six figures," says Keldie. "Our Polycom system leverages our clinicians' time and expertise every time we use them."

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Through its telemedicine network, Clinical e-Health Solutions not only saves costs associated with having clinicians travel to client facilities, but it dramatically cuts down on the time lost to these daily commutes. "Some of our physicians were working 10-hour days, though in that time, they might have been able to provide only six to eight hours of point-of-service care. That means they were losing two to four x hours every day to windshield time."

Polycom systems even serve as a retention tool for key staffers. "Our oncologist started his practice in Pennsylvania," explains Keldie. "When he announced he was moving to Washington state and would need to look for another job, we said, 'You already have a job – with us.' Today he serves our Pennsylvania clients from his home in Washington using Polycom."

Targeting growth with Polycom

As it sets its sights on a fast-growing commercial healthcare sector looking for cost-conscious ways to deliver better, safer and more effective care, Clinical e-Health Solutions plans to build on its existing Polycom infrastructure.

"Our infrastructure team worked closely with Polycom to create our existing network, from the proof-of-concept stage through to deployment," says Dr. Keldie. "The support we received from Polycom met or exceeded our expectations, and we were up and running quickly. Now that we have that model in place, we can successfully deploy more production systems with our in-house staff."

For now, the company plans to add up to 10 new Polycom VSX 3000 systems to its telemedicine network by the end of 2009. And as demand for its services continues to grow, Clinical e-Health Solutions will look to its partner Polycom for solutions that ensure a healthy future for the telemedicine pioneer.

About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence™ Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best TCO, scalability, and security—on-premises, hosted, or cloud delivered.

For more information, visit www.polycom.com, call 1-800-POLYCOM, or contact your Polycom sales representative.

