Establish Your Cloud EHR and Grow with Confidence

The future of healthcare workloads is in the cloud

Less than a decade ago, it was rare to hear about healthcare organizations moving anything—especially their electronic health record (EHR) systems—into the cloud. As a traditionally risk-averse industry, healthcare organizations had concerns regarding security compliance, potential patient interruption during the transition, and securing talent with the skills to execute. After witnessing sectors with similar protection needs (government, financial) embrace the cloud, healthcare organizations are increasingly pursuing the benefits of cloud-based solutions to operate more efficiently and drive innovation.

It's important to remember that despite the risks, initiating modernization with a public cloud presence in your environment offers significant benefits. For both migration and net new workloads, cloud uses introduce the opportunity to optimize your technology stack to reduce costs, increase scalability, and improve system responsiveness, system reliability, and interoperability. The clear benefits of transitioning EHR workloads to the cloud lead us to a lingering question: "Where is the best place to start this bigger modernization?"

Instead of dedicating resources to data center infrastructure maintenance, transitioning those responsibilities to a cloud provider, like Amazon Web Services (AWS), can decrease data costs through a pay-as-you-go pricing structure while maintaining the same high performance as an on-premises data center.

Why AWS?

The weight of an IT team's vast range of responsibilities (troubleshooting, automation, system monitoring, backup and disaster recovery management, etc.) can cause actions to be reactionary instead of proactive. Migrating EHR workloads to AWS allows healthcare IT teams to minimize time spent on routine maintenance tasks and security and instead pursue other high-priority projects. On AWS, organizations can benefit from an easily scalable and extensive global cloud infrastructure designed to support resilience, delivering highly available data for uninterrupted service.

Additional benefits in migrating EHR workloads to AWS:

- Gain tools to identify, mitigate, and manage potential risks
- Quickly recover applications and data after an outage or disaster
- Raise security posture and simplify compliance with more than 130 HIPAA-eligible services.

If your organization is in the early phases of its cloud journey, you can ease the transition to the cloud by establishing an Isolated Recovery Environment (IRE). This provides a low-risk way to create an initial footprint in the cloud and allows your organization to develop cloud familiarity. This net-new environment creates a mirrored replica of your production operational database which can be utilized in both a read-only or read-write fashion. Access to this environment is granted to end users using a browser or mobile application. This solution supports your overall resiliency, providing an emergency solution in the face of a cyberattack or natural disaster.

Why work with AWS Partner Sapphire Health?

Two of the biggest challenges reported by healthcare organizations running infrastructure in the cloud are integration with other vendors' solutions and a lack of internal expertise. Recent research reports

that up to 75% of healthcare organizations rely on external consultants from third parties to enhance their cloud expertise and bandwidth, contributing to their overall success with cloud deployments.[1] This gap in customer knowledge is where AWS Partners, like Sapphire Health, excel.

Through its expansive partner ecosystem, AWS easily connects customers with purpose-built services for the healthcare industry and access to collaborations with experts at the intersection of health and technology through the AWS Partner Network (APN). Just as some providers specialize in specific care, APN provides access to Partners who specialize in working with specific healthcare EHR workloads, such as Epic® on AWS.

Establish your presence with support from proven experts

How Sapphire Health supports your journey

Working with a partner who is well-versed in EHR migrations and AWS infrastructure brings the best of both worlds to your transformation. Sapphire Health has deep experience in helping hospitals and healthcare organizations migrate systems to the cloud, with a specialty focus on Epic® workloads. As a leader in cloud-native healthcare solutions, they've built an in-depth knowledge of the best practices to avoid challenges and the technical nuances that must be considered for a successful transition.

Sapphire Health puts you at an advantage with a phased approach to technical infrastructure updates:

1. **At the star**t: Starting with understanding your unique needs and requirements, Sapphire Health designs and validates an architecture that fits into a long-term cloud strategy. This can include training on the cloud offerings needed to fulfill goals.
2. **During**: Sapphire Health works closely with EHR support teams to ensure a seamless support experience. Their proven expertise can accelerate the deployment timeline for an IRE solution or a deeper disaster recovery solution.
3. **After cloud deployment:** Once EHR workloads have been established or migrated, Sapphire Health offers ongoing support through a regular maintenance and upgrade cadence or managed services.

Sapphire Health helps EHR transitions using AWS LZA

Setting up the proper configurations to ensure seamless integration of all on-premises and cloud system integrations—whether to public, private, or vendor-hosted clouds—can be challenging. But with Sapphire Health and AWS, you're not alone. The Landing Zone Accelerator for Healthcare on AWS (LZA) solution allows you to easily deploy a cloud foundation to support highly regulated workloads. Sapphire Health utilizes this AWS Solution to establish platform readiness with the proper security and operational capabilities that align with AWS best practices and multiple global compliance frameworks for the intended workload.

Using LZA helps reduce the effort and complexity of supporting your healthcare compliance efforts and helps you better manage and govern a multi-account environment. While the LZA solution alone will not make you compliant, it deploys a foundational set of capabilities that enables regulated customers to set up their AWS environments in days instead of weeks in an optimized and secure configuration when paired with Sapphire Health's expertise.

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[1] KLAS Research, *Epic® in the Public Cloud 2024*, Nov 2024

When you work with Sapphire Health, items like reviewing, evaluating, and assessing your LZA configurations for alignment with your organization's needs for security features, tools, and compliance are fully managed. Experts at Sapphire Health can help you determine which integrations across more than 35 AWS services can be used to satisfy regulatory requirements and ensure your cloud environment complies. This sets you up to successfully migrate additional workloads when the time comes.

Taking the next step

Getting to AWS cloud with Sapphire Health

Are you curious to know more about the next steps to the cloud? For those in the early stages of developing a strategy to move EHRs or connected workloads to the cloud, Sapphire Health is here to help develop the cloud test case for your organization with a stand-alone, isolated IRE. The next blog covers IREs in-depth and discusses their advantages, disadvantages, and value in navigating a bigger migration.