



case study

# Wentworth-Douglass Hospital Chooses Thycotic Secret Server to Secure Privileged Account Passwords



## BACKGROUND

Founded in 1904, Wentworth-Douglass (WD) Hospital is one of the largest acute care hospitals in the Seacoast region of New Hampshire and Southern Maine. Keeping patient information secure has always been one of the hospital's top priorities, and a crucial part of its security strategy focuses on preventing hackers from gaining access to passwords for privileged accounts.

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Scott Heffner  
Networking Operations and Telecommunications Manager  
WD Hospital

## CHALLENGES

WD Hospital is one of many healthcare institutions that need to protect hospital records and patient data from potential cyber attackers. According to the Ponemon Institute, attacks within the healthcare sector have risen 100% from 2010-2014.<sup>1</sup>

While the hospital originally had a manual system in place for storing and securing privileged account passwords, as the hospital expanded, its IT department needed a more effective way to encrypt and manage a growing number of these sensitive privileged credentials. To do this, they decided to move forward with a project to onboard a privileged account management (PAM) solution.

## SOLUTION

As networking operations and telecommunications manager for WD Hospital, Scott Heffner oversees all non-desktop telecommunications and IT infrastructure for the entire organization. He led the search for a privileged account management solution to reduce the security gap created by privileged accounts. After several demos and a detailed proof of concept, Scott and his team agreed Thycotic Secret Server was the right fit for the hospital's PAM requirements.

“Healthcare organizations must do everything in their power to put security measures in place to protect their privileged accounts,” said Heffner. “Thycotic Secret Server is an easy-to-deploy solution that helps us not only manage our privileged account passwords, but makes sure that these passwords are sufficiently secure.”

Thycotic Secret Server's ability to double-encrypt, require checkout approval on privileged credentials, and automatically change passwords for administrator and service accounts were very important abilities for WD Hospital's overall PAM requirements.

## BUSINESS IMPACT

Deploying the Thycotic privileged account management solution was swift and easy for Heffner and his team. Their deployment began with a single admin test group and quickly expanded to the hospital's entire Information Systems and Regulatory Compliance departments.

<sup>1</sup> Criminal Attacks on Healthcare Organizations Increase 100 Percent  
<https://www2.idexperts.com/press/single/criminal-attacks-on-healthcare-organizations-increase-100-percent>



Aside from the encryption options and automatic password changing capabilities, Scott and his team were impressed with how quick and painless it is to update Thycotic Secret Server, cutting out hours of maintenance time that are typically allotted for managing and upgrading similar applications.

“It’s the only system I’ve ever seen where you literally log in, it tells you an update is available, the wizard is three clicks, and then you’re up to date,” said Scott. “It is so nice to have a product that is pain free when it comes to performing upgrades. For what it does, it’s so valuable to us.”

**“In a healthcare environment, there is nothing more important than a privileged account because it can grant access to just about anything.”**

Scott Heffner  
Networking Operations and Telecommunications Manager  
WD Hospital

## WRAP-UP

With Thycotic Secret Server, WD Hospital has the ability to lock down access by giving each Secret Server user varying degrees of privileges on the network. For example, on highly sensitive super-admin accounts, such as a domain administrator, admins must log into the Thycotic Secret Server vault and request access to the account before receiving credentials. The approval request will ping Scott or his system architect to grant approval on the usage of domain administrator credentials. This flow comes with a full audit trail so WD Hospital always knows who is accessing these accounts, who approves access, and when the account is used. Scott also uses Thycotic to generate strong, randomized passwords for service accounts, which has quickly become an integral part of their build process, as well as maintaining HIPAA compliance.

Today, Thycotic Secret Server is used to vault and manage access to over 100 end points within the WD Hospital IT infrastructure, with talks of potential expansion to other teams in the near future. Securing privileged accounts will continue to be a major piece of WD Hospital’s security strategy because of the level of access each account possesses – which can be dangerous in the wrong hands.

“Privileged accounts in a healthcare environment are extremely valuable targets for hackers and malicious actors,” noted Scott, when discussing the role PAM plays in a healthcare environment. “For our purposes, the ability to document in a secure fashion and update privileged accounts really helps to protect us from threats. Our ability to go in and not only manage passwords through Thycotic Secret Server but establish whether or not they’re secure enough is very helpful.”

### SECRET SERVER BUSINESS CASE

- ✓ Seamless deployment.
- ✓ Low cost and time commitment to support.
- ✓ Centralized control for privileged account passwords.
- ✓ Full auditing and reports.
- ✓ Automatic password changing for several platforms such as Windows local accounts, Active Directory service accounts and Unix root accounts.