

Spotlight Service

Prelude Works with CAST

The HITECH Act of 2009

addressed the privacy and security concerns associated with the electronic transmission of health information, in part, through several provisions that strengthen the civil and criminal enforcement of the HIPAA rules.

As the aging-services field gets closer to electronic health records, and the risk associated with HIPAA-disclosure issues increase, data security and privacy will become more important than ever for long-term and post-acute care providers.

With this in mind, I've been working with Dennis Stufft, president and CEO of Prelude Services, to compile a list of questions you should ask your information technology (IT) department and vendors. Answers to these questions will help you assess the gaps in your IT systems and the level of risk that they pose. The lists below are a result of years of experiences Dennis spent managing IT.

Please visit http://www.preludeservices.com/documents/IT_Security_Questions_You_Should_Ask.pdf to finish reading the article addressing individual and data security questions.



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Prelude elects to undergo an extensive third party, annual audit of our service procedures and processes. Although not required, Prelude has implemented this process annually to demonstrate our commitment to maintaining quality internal controls for managing your IT assets.

The audit process we selected is an internationally recognized auditing standard developed by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Completion of this in-depth audit indicates that a service organization has undergone a comprehensive review of its control activities, including controls regulating information technology and related processes. In today's global economy, service organizations must demonstrate implementation of adequate controls and safeguards to host or process customer data. In addition, the requirements of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 implemented after a number of major corporate accounting investigations (including Enron), make audit reports even more important when reporting on effective internal controls within service organizations. All publicly traded companies must complete this auditing process.

In an effort to create global consistency for reporting on controls at service

organizations, the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB) and the Auditing Standards Board (AUB) in the United States, have issued new standards for evaluating and reporting internal controls. In June, the current Statement on Auditing Standards No. 70 ("SAS 70") is being replaced by a new auditing standard called SSAE 16.

SSAE 16 will create some internal changes for Prelude. One of the changes will be additional review of monitoring procedures, which will enable management to confirm company-wide compliance of standards. These procedures will also stipulate how our monitoring activities are completed.

KPMG performs the audit for Prelude, which requires several months of work for both companies. Prelude provides detailed information to KPMG enabling them to review, test and verify internal business operations and security controls. A written report is provided by KPMG and reviewed by the Prelude Board of Directors.

The business practice of implementing a third-party audit is a prime example of the importance we place on managing your IT assets.

Prelude New Hires

It is my pleasure to announce that :

Rob Fallat joined Prelude Services in March 2011 as an Infrastructure Analyst.

Rob's brings with him over 10 years of network experience at the Hershey Company. He started as an Intern and worked his way up to Leader of Global Communications. Rob is also a Technical Instructor at Kaplan.

John Kanost joined Prelude Services in March 2011 as a Web Designer/ Developer.

John brings with him over 13 years of graphic design and web development experience. John has worked for companies such as Custom Direct LLC and Bon-Ton, as well as ministries and information management providers.

Matt Combs joined Prelude Services in April 2011 as a Helpdesk Support Analyst.

Matt brings with him eight years of customer service with combined experience in retail sales, technical and help desk support. Matt has worked for companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Wal-Mart.

Wendy Shumaker joined Prelude Services on, April 2011 as a Helpdesk Support Analyst.

Wendy brings with her 14 years of IT experience. She was an Application Support Specialist with RR Donnelley & Sons for nine years and most recently a Help Desk Analyst at the law firm McNees Wallace and Nurick.

Join me in welcoming the new members of Prelude Services!

EHR Decisions

Electronic Health Record (EHR) information and news



From the Chair: Interoperability 101

by Karen Bell, MD, MMS on April 11, 2011

If you practice medicine, you need the latest knowledge, tools and instruments specific to your specialty...and ready access to as much relevant information as possible about each patient. The latter is the driving force behind the current push for you to adopt and use an electronic health record (EHR) as part of your basic set of tools. Like your other major technical investments, your EHR must meet your needs for functionality. It must also possess state of the art security and be "interoperable" to the extent possible. At present, however, true interoperability – the ability to work with and communicate with other sources of information that give you the full picture of your patients' health and history—remains the holy grail of medical informatics.

Why is interoperability such a challenge? And when can you expect to "plug and play", meaning easily get information to and from any lab that is convenient for your patient, get a feed from a patient's Holter monitor while he is wearing it, or see a current problem list to which all of your patient's doctors have contributed? The challenges to achieving this type of data access are both technical and cultural.

The key to understanding interoperability on the technical side is to understand the various categories of standards necessary for disparate electronic information sources to communicate reliably and usefully – vocabulary or terminology standards, messaging standards, and a standard approach to implementation guidance. Using the transmission of lab orders and results as an example, we need a consistent vocabulary that goes far beyond the name of the test. We need standard terminology for everything related to the patient, for information identifying you as the ordering clinician, for presentation of results, for how the normal ranges are presented, for qualifying information about the test, for example, was the sample hemolyzed), and for qualifying information about

the result such as recommendations for a follow up test. At present, we have standard terminologies for many of the actual test names, but little else.

Messaging standards determine how the information or data elements are packaged for secure travel over the internet. The good news is that there are a limited but sufficient number of messaging standards at present and a lot of work has been done to date to select the one that is most appropriate for a given situation. Continuing with our example with respect to lab data, the HIT community has agreed that HL7 (Health Level 7) is the most appropriate approach for messaging laboratory related information.

The most difficult step in the technical process is standards for implementation guidance. Simple translation: when the data are delivered to a disparate EHR system, implementation guides allow the second system to accept and integrate them in a way that makes them as presentable to the clinician as if it were entered locally. Implementation guides are specific for different types of data and need to work for all types of EHRs. While initial work on implementation guides for several types of lab data has commenced, a lot more work is necessary in this area before the industry can achieve true interoperability for lab data and information. Meanwhile, implementation guidance still needs to be written for many other types of data.

"Article by Karen Bell, MD, MMS, Chair, Certification Commission for Health Information Technology (CCHIT®), originally appearing at <http://ehrdecisions.com>."

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Tech Tips: Laptop Batteries:

By J.R Zeigler, A+, MCDST - Prelude Desktop Support Team Leader

Laptops are often utilized off a docking station and away from a power source. Their internal battery allows for approximately 4-6 hours of use without AC power.

Laptop batteries, like all batteries, degrade over time. The 'industry standard' is to rate the battery for 300 recharges, amounting to one recharge per day for about a year. Thus, the batteries are only warranted for a one year period, even if the laptop has a 3 year or longer warranty. While many batteries last longer than their 'rating', they degrade much faster if the laptop is used on battery power often, requiring one or more recharges per day.

Decreased usage time of 3,2, or even 1 hour may occur from fully charged batteries that have begun to degrade. An icon displays in the System Tray indicating approximately how many battery minutes and hours remain at the current usage level alerting you to switch to AC power when needed.

Best practices to increase the life of the laptop battery on a single, full charge include: decreasing display brightness levels, (single largest draw on the battery), not listening to music, not leaving unused programs open, turning off wireless if not being utilized, and removing USB devices.

When possible, discharge the the battery completely before recharging. The more often laptop batteries are recharged and discharged, the shorter the battery's useful life. If the laptop is going to be in a docking station for an extended period, remove the battery and store it in a safe, cool place. Avoid exposure to extreme temperatures. If the laptop is exposed to extreme cold or hot temperatures, allow it to cool down/warm up before use.

When purchasing a laptop, there are two battery sizes available: 6-cell and 9-cell. 9-cell batteries last longer after each charge, but are still limited to a maximum

number of recharges. Many laptops also support an additional battery (for extra life) that can be plugged into the bay normally used for the DVD-Rom Drive.

Please contact Prelude Helpdesk for further details and additional information regarding extending the life of your laptop battery.



E-mail tips..

Put an end to e-mail CC abuse

Unwanted "CC-ed" e-mail messages leave many businesspeople each day scratching their heads and wondering "Why did I receive this?" and "What am I supposed to do with this?"

You may not be able to completely stop the flood of CCs. But you can stem the tide with these tactics:

- Talk to the people who CC you. Each time you receive a CC that you were not expecting or do not understand, let the sender know. If the sender has a good reason for sending it to you, ask the person to make the reason more explicit the next time.
- Develop a CC policy. Discuss guidelines to improve the CC situation across your group or organization. Many people genuinely believe that they need to CC others; an open conversation will set them straight. Start with these reasonable CC guidelines.

Send a CC only if the recipients:

- Will know why they are receiving the e-mail. If you have not mentioned a person by name in the body of the message, he or she may be only peripherally involved. Send a separate message to apprise that person of progress.
- Do not need to reply. Recipients often do not know what to do when they read a CC message. Their uncertainty often unleashes a torrent of acknowledgement messages, sent to everyone on the original recipient list.
- Adapted from "A Strict Policy on CC-ing Can Prevent Unwanted E-Mail"

Leslie O'Flahaven, Writing Matters,
<http://writingmatters.typepad.com>.



Meet Prelude

Jamie Mervine: My introduction into the Information Technology world began as an IT recruiter in January of 2000, not long after graduating from college. I came to Prelude in 2002 and have been in the Help Desk ever since. I have seen Prelude and the Help Desk in particular change tremendously over the years. Help Desk has gone from a few people handling some calls and emails throughout the day to 6 people handling well over 120 calls a day as well as numerous emails and ISSR forms, supporting many different applications in various areas of the country. I'm proud to have been a part of this transformation.

In my spare time I enjoy travelling and sports such as basketball, golf and lacrosse. My wife Kristin and I have been married for seven years and we have a one year old daughter named Emily who is the joy of our lives.

Prelude's Helpdesk Comments:

Our clients say:

- Kyle was extremely patient and helpful in resolving this situation with an outside vendor. We couldn't have done it without him!
- Thank you Jamey for your help during a stressful morning with a lot of things going on! As always, we appreciate you more than you know!
- Thanks Jon for being personable on the phone and digging into the issue!

EYE ON IT



To reach the helpdesk, please call 717-441-2411 (direct) or 800-579-1047, option 1, or if you prefer e-mail, helpdesk@preludeservices.com.

The helpdesk team is waiting to hear from you!



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Events

- 2011 AAHSA Future of Aging Service Conference - April 11 - 13, 2011, Washington, DC, Booth 717
- PANPHA Annual Conference and Exposition - June 15, 16, 2011, Hershey, PA, Booth 29
- AOPHA Annual Conference and Trade Show - September 7 - 9, 2011, Columbus, OH
- 2011 AAHSA Annual Meeting and Exposition - Oct 16 - Oct 19, 2011, Washington, DC. Booth 2415

Prelude Provides the following Services

- * Consulting Services *Project Management Services *Outsourcing *Telecommunications
- *Training *Software Hosting *Software Development * Resident services