



# CASE STUDY

## SOUTH SHORE MENTAL HEALTH

### A Growing Organization *and* Increased Pressure *on the* IT Infrastructure Calls *for a* New Approach



**Organization Profile** - A private, non-profit healthcare provider serving more than 9,000 clients annually at six facilities in Southeastern Massachusetts.

**IT Challenge** - Bring stability to South Shore Mental Health's network operations to prepare for the expansion of the organization, support additional applications and become more end-user focused without bringing on additional staff in the IT department.

**Solution** - InteQ's InfraSolve™ service, which proactively monitors and manages application, database, network and systems infrastructure by providing problem identification, diagnostics and resolution for maximum application and infrastructure availability.

**Results** - A stable and reliable network infrastructure, significant productivity enhancements, the smooth addition of video conferencing to the network and a simple, effective way to view the performance of the entire South Shore Mental Health network through InteQ's InfraPortal™ offering.

With a more than 75-year history of serving the Southeastern Massachusetts region, South Shore Mental Health (SSMH) has in recent years seen its organization grow and expand beyond its Quincy, MA, headquarters to five satellite facilities managing 900 staff members and 47 community-based operations throughout the region. As the organization has grown, so have the pressures on the SSMH IT infrastructure, which now needs to support high-speed Internet access, e-mail, time and attendance software, a virtual private network, remote access, and recently, the addition of a video conferencing solution.

With a modest full-time staff of four, SSMH Director of Information Systems and Telecommunications Tom Riemer was challenged to meet the evolving needs of a growing user organization in the most effective and cost-efficient manner. When the vendor who had installed and configured much of SSMH's network failed to provide a satisfactory level of support for that infrastructure, Riemer looked at a series of different service providers and ultimately determined that InteQ Corporation was the only that could provide reliable, proactive 7/24 monitoring and management of SSMH's systems.

"After an extensive evaluation of our options – both adding internal resources and bringing in a service provider – we felt that InteQ offered us a unique combination of expertise, reliability and a proven process that made it the natural choice," said Riemer. "Being reliable and having a proven set of processes in place are core values of a healthcare institution such as South Shore Mental Health, and with its fully-redundant Global Visibility Center™ and adherence to IT Service Management best practices, we saw that InteQ shared those values."

#### **InteQ in Action**

After being selected, the first step was for InteQ to take a complete inventory and make an analysis of SSMH's entire IT infrastructure. This led to a series of recommendations and actions that eliminated many of the performance issues that were related to the legacy design of the system, leading to an immediate improvement in performance.

As InteQ moved through the provisioning process and began to monitor SSMH's systems, Riemer and his team were evaluating video conferencing solutions to add to the network. As SSMH was about to make the investment in video conferencing, InteQ noted that the current network infrastructure couldn't support the addition of the solution, and recommended an upgrade to its routers, which would bring the network up to speed and allow it to support the video conferencing solution. With the help of InteQ, a potentially time consuming mistake was avoided and the deployment of the solution to the SSMH community was smooth and efficient.

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With InteQ's proactive monitoring and management solution fully up and running, Riemer and his team were able to turn their attention away from the operational activities and focus on end-user support and business-focused activities. Riemer also now has a clear view of his entire IT infrastructure through InteQ's InfraPortal service, a highly secure Web-based reporting portal that provides views into the availability and performance of the business application infrastructure as well as detailed application/device specific breakdowns.

"Now, when we're evaluating the addition of new applications to the network, I'm able to get a quick snapshot of its performance to help make the right decisions on whether we have the bandwidth to support new applications," said Riemer.

Within the first few months that InteQ was managing SSMH's infrastructure, Riemer was able to see the stability and reliability that he was looking for, and end-user confidence in the organization's systems rapidly grew. Riemer and his staff no longer faced regular network outages as they arrived for work in the morning, as InteQ's 7/24 management avoided problems and provides rapid solutions to minimize downtime when problems do occur.

"Without the help of InteQ, South Shore Mental Health could not have done this without spending enormous amounts of money and time to do so," said Riemer. "The expertise that InteQ brought in evaluating our network, making recommendations to help make it more stable and then providing reliable monitoring and management of our applications and infrastructure has proven to be invaluable. And just as importantly, while InteQ provided us with the expertise and management our systems needed, our internal staff was able to focus on improving our systems and end-user support."

#### **"Our Trusted Advisors"**

With SSMH's systems now stable and reliable, Riemer and his staff have confidence that they have the pieces in place to accommodate additional expansion by SSMH, whether that comes in the addition of more remote facilities, an increase in end-users at its headquarters, or in the deployment of new applications to their network.

"The ability of my team to focus on making improvements to our IT systems rather than monitoring and managing what we have in place provides us with greater and greater benefits the longer that we work with InteQ. We've been able to implement a range of new services and dramatically increase our responsiveness to end-user requests," said Riemer. "Along with the efficiencies that InteQ's management services provide, we know that when evaluating new hardware, software or other options for our network, we can lean on their expertise to help us make the best decisions for SSMH. They've become our trusted advisors."