

# MCL migrates application delivery for secure remote access and flexibility

## Citrix ADC secures delivery of critical applications as Dutch hospital responds to pandemic challenges

Medical Center Leeuwarden (MCL) is a top clinical hospital in Leeuwarden and Harlingen, for acute, highly complex and basic care in Friesland. The hospital is focused on research, education and innovation, and provides exceptional care for each individual patient. MCL also supports the IT of Noorderbreedte, which mainly offers care to the elderly in Friesland for short respite periods, continuous care and, in some cases, in the long term. Noorderbreedte also offers daytime activities and day treatment. It has 15 locations and a rehabilitation center.

Like others in the healthcare sector, MCL is undergoing digital transformation. It wants its medical teams to be able to work remotely, at home or from other clinical locations; it also needs full mobility around its sites, with users able to work from any device. It is a given that medical teams need easy access to the latest electronic patient records.

“The last 18 months have seen a huge increase in remote working,” explains Roelof Mulder, Project Leader MIT, MCL. “More patient consultation is taking place online, there is more diagnosis being done remotely. We expect remote caregiving to be a part of future healthcare.”

### Increase in remote access creating new challenges

This places unprecedented strain on MCL’s ability to manage its application delivery. It needs medical, management and administration teams to have unbroken access to their most critical applications, but it must do so in a manner that is timely and efficient.

“The need for remote access has been around for years, but COVID changed everything,” says Mulder. “We need access to Epic, to Microsoft workplace tools and to many other specialist medical applications.”



**Industry**  
Healthcare

**Location**  
Netherlands

**Citrix products**  
• Citrix ADC

**The solution**  
Citrix ADC streamlines application delivery across any network or cloud and supports a consistent application security posture

MCL has a long-standing relationship with Citrix. “Epic in combination with Citrix has always been key,” says Mulder. “In fact, Citrix pre-dates Epic for us.”

MCL has used Citrix ADC MPX appliances since 2016 to manage load balancing and remote access. The majority of applications are accessed via thin clients on Citrix. Given the age of the Citrix ADC MPX appliances, Mulder says it was a natural step to look at migrating – and an opportunity to consider future demands.

“We understand the importance of this migration and spent a good deal of time working on the details of the RFP,” Mulder explains. “We didn’t want any unpleasant surprises – technical or cost related – during the implementation stage.”

### Simplifying the migration process during a period of upheaval

The Citrix ADC SDX appliance that replaces MPX is a multitenant platform on which users can provision and manage multiple virtual Citrix ADC instances. The migration was managed by PQR, a Citrix partner and another long-term provider of IT services to MCL. Mulder admits that solutions from other vendors were considered, but Citrix was the favorite.

“Our engineers are happy. The solution is easy to configure and maintain. When you stay with the same solution, migration is much easier to manage,” says Mulder. “Clearly the Citrix ADC solution fits much better with our Citrix backend. Integration was optimal.”

With all the upheaval caused by COVID, and the additional strain placed on the IT team, Mulder says there is real value in working with an experienced Citrix partner: “PQR’s expertise enabled us to adopt the new platform quickly, and to understand its full functionality. That knowledge is very useful to us.”

### Future-proofing application delivery

The result is a more secure, efficient application delivery environment. With a centralized platform and clear visibility of application activity, Mulder and team spend less time on management and more on refining the user experience.

“Ninety-nine percent of our users would never know what takes place under the hood. They don’t need to know about Citrix ADC, they just care that the applications they need are working,” Mulder says. “They see a portal, and it takes them to what they need.”

More effective application access ensures more effective workstyles. Healthcare organizations are reluctant to predict too far ahead, but Mulder acknowledges that flexibility will be key. MCL’s policy during the COVID pandemic is ‘if you can work from home, work from home’. Partially working at home after the pandemic will also be likely to continue.

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**Roelof Mulder**  
Project Leader MIT  
Medisch Centrum Leeuwarden

Moving from MPX to SDX creates more opportunities for virtualization. This may enable multiple instances in separate networks with separate workloads, allowing MCL to separate traffic. This will help MCL establish distinct policies for the main site and the 15 care homes and allow it to migrate different devices without impacting the wider business. This also allows MCL to separate its production and test environments.

The migration future-proofs MCL's application delivery for the medium-term. Mulder is exploring application firewalling, and how this would impact the user experience and security: "A more powerful device gives us more functionality, particularly around application security for remote users."

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