

Business resiliency and care continuity in healthcare with Citrix

When clinical systems go down, patient safety is at risk and revenue stops. Regulatory mandates don't pause for infrastructure failures. This brief outlines why resilience is a strategic architectural decision and how Citrix delivers it.

Why resilience is critical now

The attacker is already inside

Healthcare sees 460+ ransomware attacks per year, with an average dwell time of 22 days before detection. By the time an incident is declared, the damage is staged. Attacks shut down EHR access, disable imaging, and force staff onto paper often for weeks or months.

The attack surface is expanding

Unpatched biomedical devices, fragmented M&A infrastructure, distributed care delivery, and sprawling network dependencies compound each other. AI is accelerating exposure further — enabling faster lateral movement and automated reconnaissance at a scale security teams can't match on their own.

Consequences compound

HIPAA provides no exceptions for technology failures. A prolonged outage triggers regulatory exposure, OCR scrutiny, and potential fines, but the damage doesn't stop there. Patients divert to competing facilities, elective procedures are cancelled, and revenue cycle operations stall. The reputational harm compounds long after systems are restored: patient trust, health system rankings, and community perception don't recover on the same timeline as your infrastructure.

Case study: When ransomware hit

Large academic health system

Issue

Ransomware moved laterally through on-premises infrastructure. Approximately 7,000 clinicians lost access to the EHR and 100+ applications. Clinics closed. Downtime procedures activated.

Solution

Because clinical application delivery ran through Citrix DaaS Cloud, the cloud delivery environment was unaffected. Non-persistent session hosts weren't encrypted. The blast radius was contained architecturally — not reactively.

Impact

Citrix environment restored in 48 hours. Full hospital services back in 9 days — half the 18-day industry average for a comparable incident. The difference wasn't the incident response. It was a decision made architecturally before the attack.

7,000

clinicians lost access

2 days

to restore access to
Citrix environment

50%

faster recovery time



The Citrix platform advantage

Citrix decouples user workspaces from the infrastructure beneath them. When a layer fails, sessions spin up elsewhere automatically — clinicians stay in their workflow, and the disruption is invisible. Key capabilities:

- Failover across sites and regions without user disruption
- Identity-driven policy enforcement that follows the user, not the device
- Application-layer security that structurally prevents lateral movement
- Any-device access so clinicians can connect from whatever is available in a crisis
- Unified observability across hybrid and multi-cloud environments

The resilience framework

Phase 01: Discovery — Map the critical path

Identify your “Tier 0” and “Tier 1” services — the foundational elements like identity providers, DNS, and primary data streams. If these go down, your business stops completely.

Phase 02: Architecture — Decouple the infrastructure

Separate your applications and user workspaces from the underlying physical or cloud infrastructure. This ensures that if a hardware layer or a specific cloud region fails, your software and worker environments can seamlessly spin up elsewhere.

Phase 03: Security — Secure the access plane

Implement unified, identity-driven access gateways. By centralizing visibility and applying strict context-aware policies, you protect your decoupled workloads from lateral threat movements.

Phase 04: Operations — Automate observability and failover

Deploy intelligent monitoring tools paired with automated failover scripts. The goal is to detect an anomaly and reroute traffic before human operators even realize an outage is looming.

Next steps

Contact your Citrix account team to schedule a resilience readiness assessment.

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Enterprise Sales

North America | 800-424-8749
Worldwide | +1 408-790-8000

Headquarters

851 Cypress Creek Road, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309, United States

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