

Patient Care, Always on Call

A healthy increase in systems' availability is just what the doctor ordered for Beaver Dam Community Hospital, thanks to Series VAR and IBM®.



“Beaver Dam Hospital was able to put logical partitioning to work for them with the help of Series VAR. They reduced their backup cycle downtime to virtually zero, which is a real plus in helping their system users deliver uninterrupted high-quality patient care.”

**Julie Heeg, IBM @server® iSeries™ Sales Executive,
Business Partners**

Modern hospitals don't wait for patients to walk, wheel or be carried in. Forward-thinking organizations like Beaver Dam Community Hospitals, Inc. of Beaver Dam, Wisconsin use community outreach to keep people healthy rather than simply returning the ailing to health.

Created by the merger of two hospitals in 1972, Beaver Dam provides patient-centered care to the surrounding community through multiple facilities. These locations offer preventive health education and screenings, hospital-based services, referral to larger care centers, and long-term nursing home or home health care programs.

Information on close to 3,000 admissions, 13,000 emergency room visits and 71,000 outpatient registrations each year resides on Beaver Dam's IBM @server iSeries server. The information is accessed through McKesson's Series 2000™ healthcare information system, which includes financial, clinical, medical records and ancillary applications, designed specifically for the IBM iSeries.

“The individualized care the hospital strives to provide is only possible with accurate information on patient care, but we found that users didn't have access to information they needed,” says Carol Ciancio, Beaver Dam's Chief Information Officer. “Lack of systems' availability of as much as 12 hours was a significant problem during quarterly back-ups, meaning we would have to pull in additional resources or conduct manual work.”

For assistance, she turned to Series VAR, a subsidiary of IBM Premier Business Partner Vertical VAR. IBM Premier Business Partners must achieve a high level of proven customer satisfaction, as measured annually by an independent survey company selected by IBM. They also invest in skills development, technical training and other IBM programs to ensure the advice they give is of the highest quality.

Series VAR advised a hardware upgrade and a Logical Partitioning (LPAR) strategy that delivered the goods: ease of use, high availability and a backup cycle with virtually zero downtime.



“This has been such a success for us that I strongly encourage other hospitals to use Series VAR to exploit IBM’s partitioning technology.”

– Carol Ciancio, Chief Information Officer, Beaver Dam Community Hospitals, Inc.

Series VAR solution makes the most of the IBM iSeries platform

Beaver Dam’s main hospital software is designed to run on the IBM iSeries platform, a key component of their patient-centered care thanks to its stability and reliability, according to Ms. Ciancio. She adds, “If we ever have any problems, they are very quickly addressed by Series VAR.”

She discovered Series VAR at a trade show, and was pleased to find the company had expertise in both the software and IBM hardware the hospital used. Although located in Chamblee, Georgia – not exactly in the neighborhood – “Series VAR covers hospitals from Hawaii to Maine and all states in between,” says Steve Larkin, Sales Manager, Series VAR.

“Our IBM value add is tied directly to McKesson’s Series solution,” Mr. Larkin explains. “The Series VAR offering is unique, teaming iSeries computer experts with McKesson software professionals to give IBM customers the best possible service and the most knowledge in the iSeries environment.”

He adds, “The iSeries is definitely a great fit for the software. In healthcare, downtime negatively impacts patient care; the iSeries’ rock solid architecture and technology greatly minimize downtime.”

“At Beaver Dam, downtime during a backup triggers a manual process of filling in special forms,” says Ms. Ciancio. “After the backup is complete, the information on the forms is entered into the computer. This two-step process increases the chance

of errors, which could put the patient at risk or affect the process flow and procedures in other departments.”

IBM Business Partner:	Series VAR
Solutions:	iSeries Solutions, IBM Hardware and Services, High Availability for Series 2000™, PCs and Peripherals, Maintenance Audits
Servicing:	North America
Customer Target:	McKesson Series 2000™ for Hospitals

LPAR creates power and simplicity

IBM’s logical partitioning feature enables companies to make a single multiprocessing iSeries server run as if it were two or more independent systems. Essentially, through LPAR, multiple systems can be configured, each running its own copy of the operating system and other business applications. The systems reside on the same physical server, but they are distinct and separate from one another, giving the powerful benefits of multiple systems with the simplicity of one.

Series VAR brought LPAR to Beaver Dam after upgrading the software. Next was the hardware upgrade and migration, and finally, the LPAR configuration into four partitions. Training ensured the Beaver Dam information technology staff could take advantage of the new features.

“I’m extremely pleased with the work and expertise that Series VAR has provid-

ed,” says Ms. Ciancio. “We talked weekly to ensure any issues were worked out. Service has been solid, personnel knowledgeable and the followup excellent.”

An excellent prognosis for the future

Results from the first backup cycle following the project confirmed its success. “Our users are usually down for 10 to 12 hours during backup, but we did it with zero downtime,” says Ms. Ciancio. “Our users weren’t even aware that backup was going on.”

The partitioning technology will also allow Beaver Dam to introduce a testing environment, allowing IT staff to test for any problems without affecting production or backup before going live with new software upgrades. This ensures that Beaver Dam’s system is always accessible and patient care unaffected, even if upgrades or updates have to be implemented.

While not a disaster recovery solution (that’s in the process of being reviewed by the hospital’s board), LPAR does allow for restoration of files from one partition to another, something Ms. Ciancio considers a bonus. And it sets the stage for the eventual move to electronic medical records that comply with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations.

“This has been such a success for us that I strongly encourage other hospitals to use Series VAR to exploit IBM’s partitioning technology,” says Ms. Ciancio.

In her books, IBM’s LPAR is a prescription for success.

For additional information on how **Series VAR, LLC** can help your organization, contact us at **770-216-4460** or visit our Web site at **www.seriesvar.com**.