Service visibility: A road map for IT Operations and managing your EHR system
Imagine you’re going on a trip. Not just any trip, but a long-distance adventure. You pick a destination, pack up the car, fire up your GPS, and away you go. You turn on the radio to get the local traffic report. Later on, you listen to the weather forecast—heavy snow to the north, so you decide to take the southern route. The world is your oyster—you know where you’re going, you know how to get there, and the passing scenery sets your heart singing.

Now, think about a world with no maps, no GPS, no traffic reports, and no weather forecasts—in fact, no way of knowing where you are or how to get to your destination. It’s unthinkable. That’s the thing about travel—unless you can see where you’re going, you’re not going anywhere at all. You might as well be driving blindfolded in that snow storm.

So, what has this got to do with IT operations and managing your electronic health record (EHR) system? In many ways, it’s exactly the same. Your EHR is a complex and mission-critical system on which patient outcomes are dependent. If you have zero visibility into the impact of outages or changes to your EHR and the infrastructure that supports it, you can’t deliver high-quality, consistent EHR-based administrative and clinical services. Once again, you’re going nowhere.

For example, when a server goes down, how do you know which hospital services are affected? Will a scheduled change just take your patient charting offline for a few hours? Or will it also shut down computerized physician order entry (CPOE), which can bring treatment to a halt? These are critical questions—in the worst case, lives hang in the balance.
Exactly what is EHR service visibility?

Picture a city map. It shows all of the roads and how they are connected—but it doesn’t tell you how to get from point A to point B. You can see the roads, bridges, and so on—but there’s no service-level view. For instance, there may be 100 different bus routes in the city, but the map doesn’t show this. When there’s construction or a traffic accident, there’s no way to figure out which bus routes are affected.

Hospital IT organizations need a similar map that shows how their EHR infrastructure and the services that rely on it are connected. These maps can be built using traditional discovery tools. However, just like the city map, there’s no service-level view. IT doesn’t know how the different EHR modules, features, and hospital services are routed over their IT infrastructure—they have no visibility of the “bus routes” that these hospital and clinical services use. And, when there’s construction or a traffic accident—a change or an outage—they don’t know which clinical or administrative services are affected.
It’s not IT’s fault. Until recently, mapping business services was incredibly hard. Many IT organizations have tried to map their EHR hospital services manually—and most have failed. **To start with, mapping a single clinical service can take weeks.** No one person has the end-to-end picture—instead, you have to extract, verify, and correlate knowledge from multiple domain experts. Multiply that effort by hundreds of hospital services, and the work required is astronomical.

Even if you manage to map your business services manually, you’re still no further ahead. With manual mapping, there’s just no practical way to keep up with the increasing pace of change. Healthcare IT organizations are faced with ever changing regulations, meaningful use requirements, and the need to improve patient outcomes; driving more data to the cloud. As soon as you’ve mapped a service, the service map could already be out of date. It is becoming more difficult to correlate and prioritize needs.
There’s an easier way

Imagine if you could map your EHR-related clinical and business services automatically. Even better, what if your service maps were automatically updated every time there was an infrastructure or application change? You’d have an accurate, up-to-date view of how all of your EHR hospital services are delivered—without all of the pain of manual mapping.

There are now automated service mapping solutions that make this a reality. However, it’s important to choose the right service mapping technology. Look for a solution that:

• Automatically maps complete business services within a few hours

• Does not require any significant input from your domain experts

• Traces hospital business services across your entire IT and clinical environments, not just one or two technology domains

• Maps your custom-built business services, not just standard services such as email or ERP systems

Pinpoint Disruptions In EHR Apps and Services

Easily review and roll back associated changes to mapped services

Diagnose and remediate issues

Instantly determine the severity of an alert
What are the benefits?

With automated service mapping, you’ll get complete hospital business service visibility—so you can answer the really tough questions. You’ll be able to:

• Pinpoint disruptions to your EHR that impact critical hospital business services
• Get to the root cause of hospital business service issues, rather than pointing fingers in the war room
• Instantly see the impact of planned changes to your EHR environment, rather than spending days figuring out which hospital business services are affected
• Easily optimize the architecture of your EHR-related hospital clinical and business services, reducing costs and improving reliability
• Dramatically secure and simplify major transformation initiatives, such as data center consolidations, upgrades/new modules, and migrations
Let’s recap

Your hospital depends on you to provide high-quality EHR and cost-effective hospital clinical and business services. But, if you don’t have service visibility, you’re driving blind.

Automated service mapping gives you the service visibility you need. It’s fast and intelligent—so you always have an up-to-date, accurate view of your business services. As a result, you’ll resolve service issues more quickly, understand the business impact of changes, and reduce service delivery costs. By delivering high-quality, consistent EHR-based administrative and clinical services, you’re on your way to driving better patient outcomes.
Learn More

Learn more about how eliminating outages and combatting cyberattacks can help improve patient care

About ServiceNow
ServiceNow was started in 2004 with the belief that getting simple stuff done at work can be easy, and getting complex multi-step tasks completed can be painless. From the beginning, ServiceNow envisioned a world where anyone could create powerful workflows to get enterprise work done. Today, ServiceNow is the cloud-based platform that simplifies the way we work. ServiceNow software automates, predicts, digitizes and optimizes business processes and tasks, across IT, customer service, security, human resources, and more, to create a better experience for your employees and customers while transforming your enterprise. ServiceNow is how work gets done.