

Clear Skye Helps Premise Health Maintain HITRUST CSF Certification Status

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



Executive Summary

Company: Premise Health

History: Founded in 1964 as National Health Services

Industry: Direct healthcare provider with 800+ wellness centers and over 30 products, many of which are offered via digital platform



Problem:

As a HITRUST certified healthcare provider, it is critical that Premise Health meet stringent standards for controlling access to data across its application estate. The company's legacy governance approach of emails and spreadsheets was manual and time-consuming, taking up to 40 man-hours to complete over the course of three months for more than 100 business applications. Plus, like all manual processes, application certification was exposed to the possibility of human error through complex workflows, duplicative data entry, and miscommunication.

The company needed to automate the process so the identity governance and administration (IGA) team could spend less time on manual tasks and more time on supporting a changing business in challenging times – all without the need for additional personnel or an expensive investment in a complex solution.



Solution:

Premise Health reduced both the risk and the efforts of its access certification process by implementing Clear Skye IGA on the ServiceNow platform.

Application reviews now take 25% of the person hours previously required and carry less risk of human error by leveraging the powerful automation of the Now Platform. This has led to a time savings of as many as 1,500 hours annually, along with renewed confidence in the certification process. What's more, selecting a solution native to the company's existing ServiceNow platform aligned with Premise Health's strategic efforts to simplify and standardize operations through scalable automation.

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“Clear Skye was able to **simplify, standardize, and automate** a manual process that took countless hours, dozens of spreadsheets, and hundreds of manual emails. Not only did we **reduce cost and increase security**, we significantly **improved the lives of our team members** responsible for user access.”

SUNEETHA GOLLA, CISA, CISM

Cyber Security Manager, Identity + Access Governance

Premise Health, the leading direct healthcare access company pioneering new models to deliver effortless healthcare, simplifies and standardizes access certification review using ClearSkye.

Certification as a Differentiator

Premise Health helps employers and unions provide direct access to healthcare through digital and physical access models, including virtual care, connected devices and onsite and nearsite centers.

Initially founded in 1964 as National Health Services, Premise Health now operates more than 800 wellness centers across 45 states and Guam. The company's clients save more than \$2,200 per member per year in risk-adjusted healthcare costs, when compared to those who seek care from traditional providers. Premise Health clients also report a 50% reduction in inpatient hospital admissions, a 35% reduction in specialist visits, and an 11% reduction in the need for outpatient services – showing that clients benefit from improved healthcare outcomes as well as cost savings.

Premise Health is one of the few direct healthcare providers that has achieved HITRUST Common Security Framework (CSF) Certified Status for its electronic medical records application environment. This shows that the company has met stringent regulatory compliance and risk management requirements for information security, including HIPAA, NIST, and ISO.

Maintaining HITRUST certification, as well as meeting other compliance requirements and identity and access management (IAM) best practices, is a key competitive advantage for the company. By receiving third-party attestation that it meets the requirements of recognized regulatory and best practices frameworks, Premise Health brings credibility to its security and compliance program. This brings peace of mind to its customers and their employees.

However, this advantage comes with the real cost of needing to certify and clean up application access every 60 to 90 days. According to Suneetha Golla, the director of the IAM program for Premise Health, the access certification process was “very, very manual” and “extremely tedious.”

“We would start the review in January and wouldn't be done until April,” said Golla. She estimated that each review took between 30 and 40 hours per application to complete.

A Need for Automation

For each access certification review, Golla and her team of engineers and analysts would reach out to each application owner. This meant taking the single spreadsheet that was being used to manage the review and creating a separate version for each reviewer – often creating 50+ different spreadsheet versions in the process.

Once the spreadsheets came back, Golla's team would consolidate all the responses back into a single spreadsheet and make any necessary updates to access requirements. The process would take two to three months. Like any manual process, it was prone to human error that needed to be fixed, which only added to the time spent on reviews.

The review process also distracted the IAM team from its other work. “Everybody's doing more than one job such as application/tool administration and support,” Golla said. “We have a limited number of individuals on the team. It's just impossible to put more on them.”

But Premise Health had more work for the IAM team. In 2020, HITRUST requirements changed and requires that the organization reviews critical system accounts and privileged access rights every 60 days, and that all other accounts, including user access and changes to access authorizations, are reviewed every 90 days.



Premise Health has been using the ServiceNow platform for several years. The fact that **Clear Skye runs natively on the cloud-based Now Platform** was a big draw – not just for the IAM team, but also for **senior leadership**, which was **encouraging IT teams to do more with the technology they had in place.**

“To achieve scalability is to simplify, standardize, and automate wherever possible. Clear Skye helped us with that.”

With a shorter timeline required to maintain the HITRUST certification that serves as a competitive differentiator, Premise Health couldn't risk maintaining a manual review process for more than 100+ reviews per year.

Further complicating matters, the company continues to add applications that support virtual appointments and connected medical devices. This provides convenience to clients' employees and users, as they are able to access care where and when they need it, and it also helps Premise Health stand out in the direct healthcare market. However, it also means there are more applications that require IAG governance and access reviews. Even with more reviews and a shorter timeline for completing them, the team would not be able to expand headcount at a scale that could match demand – so Premise Health turned to automation as a solution.

“One of the slogans we have at Premise Health to achieve scalability is to simplify, standardize, and automate wherever possible,” said Joey Johnson, CISO at Premise Health. “That was our number one priority from a process improvement standpoint. Clear Skye was able to help us with that.”

Extending existing investments

Premise Health has been using the ServiceNow platform for several years. The fact that Clear Skye runs natively on the cloud-based Now Platform was a big draw – not just for the IAM team, since it could leverage their existing ServiceNow expertise, but also for senior leadership, which was encouraging IT teams to do more with the technology they had in place.

The Clear Skye approach allowed Premise Health to solve its access certification challenges in a manner that required no additional hardware, end user training, or expensive integration to their ITSM system. The IAM team could take advantage of its existing expertise of the Now Platform while standardizing the automation process on a familiar product, enabling the project to kick off quickly.

“Bringing in something that was extremely expensive and trying to get the budget approved was going to be a big hurdle,” Golla said. “That's where the fact that Clear Skye is built on ServiceNow was helpful. We could easily make the case with our senior leadership that we've already invested in ServiceNow and this is something that lives in ServiceNow.”

To kick off the access certification automation project, and to make the best use of existing resources, Premise Health focused on approximately 60 reviews. The company took a risk-based approach, starting with the applications that have the most contact with personally identifiable information (PII) and protected health information (PHI).

Using Clear Skye to automate access certification reviews, Premise Health has reduced the time to complete reviews from 30 to 40 man-hours to 10 to 25 man-hours. This has resulted in overall time savings of up to 1,500 man-hours annually for the 60 reviews – and provided ample evidence that automation will save time for additional certification reviews moving forward. Plus, the automation greatly reduces overall security and compliance risk, which is critical to customers and prospects that want a health care provider they can trust.

“With the automation, we can do more with the same team. If it runs on a schedule, then my team doesn't have to babysit the whole process,” Golla said.

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