

CASE STUDY · HEALTHCARE

# How Sanford Health **Saved** **\$14 Million** In Licensing Costs.

With MyWorkDrive, Sanford Health streamlined file access for tens of thousands of clinical and administrative users while keeping files on premises.

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**\$14M**Identified  
Licensing Savings**0**Files Migrated  
to the Cloud**40k+**Users  
Reached

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## ORGANIZATION

Sanford Health, Sioux Falls, SD

Sanford Health is one of the largest rural healthcare systems in the United States, serving tens of thousands of clinical and administrative users across urban centers, regional hospitals, and rural clinics in several states.

## THE CHALLENGE

### **Microsoft Licensing Costs Were Climbing. The Usual Fix Wasn't Available.**

Sanford's Microsoft licensing costs were growing rapidly across the user base. The standard way to address that growth—consolidating onto Microsoft 365 and migrating data into Microsoft's cloud—wasn't viable for an organization with Sanford's compliance profile.

Security, regulatory, and cyber-liability requirements meant sensitive data had to stay on-premises, under direct control, with audit trails and access governance that satisfied both internal security teams and external auditors. The organization also includes several recently acquired entities, and connecting Microsoft 365 tenants across them would have introduced governance risks the security team wasn't willing to accept.

Whatever the solution looked like, it also couldn't disrupt clinical workflows. In a healthcare setting, time spent retraining a clinician or troubleshooting an unfamiliar tool is time pulled away from patient care. The IT team needed something that fit the way people already worked, didn't require new endpoints, and didn't expand an already complex VPN footprint.

## WHAT RULED OUT THE OBVIOUS OPTIONS

- ✓ **Cloud migration.**

Security and compliance restrictions prevented broad migration of sensitive data to public cloud storage.

- ✓ **Tenant consolidation.**

Connecting Microsoft 365 tenants across acquired entities introduced governance and security risks the team wasn't willing to accept.

- ✓ **Expanded VPN access.**

Scaling VPN access to a broader workforce would have added support burden and expanded the attack surface.

- ✓ **Clinical disruption.**

The rollout had to leave clinical and administrative workflows essentially untouched.

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*We needed to bring our licensing costs down without moving our data and without changing the way our people work. That eliminated almost every option on the market.*

## THE SOLUTION

### A Secure Gateway In Front Of The Existing File Shares

Sanford deployed MyWorkDrive as a secure access gateway in front of its on-premises Windows file shares. The files themselves didn't move, and permissions weren't touched. Storage remained on Sanford's own infrastructure, governed by the same NTFS and Active Directory controls that had always been in place.

The change was in how people got to the files. Instead of expanding VPN or moving data anywhere, MyWorkDrive gave users an HTTPS path: open a browser, authenticate against Sanford's existing identity provider, and the same shares appear. For people who preferred a desktop experience, the MyWorkDrive mapped drive client plugs into Windows File Explorer, the interface most of them already used every day.

### **How it fit Sanford's security model**

MyWorkDrive was deployed internally, behind Sanford's perimeter, in line with existing security policies. Because the product doesn't store file content and can't elevate permissions beyond what NTFS and Active Directory already allow, the security review was relatively short. Sanford's security and leadership teams approved it without the prolonged back-and-forth that's typical in healthcare procurement, pointing to the product documentation and the fit with internal cyber-liability requirements as the reasons.

### **Why it worked for clinicians**

Clinical adoption is usually where these projects succeed or fail. Sanford's clinicians took to MyWorkDrive without much fuss. The browser interface didn't require training, and the mapped drive looked and behaved like Windows File Explorer because, functionally, it was Windows File Explorer. Users who only needed browser access didn't have to install anything on their personal devices. Adoption went better than the team had expected, and there was no widespread workflow disruption.

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*Clinical teams adopted it without complaint. Security approved it quickly.  
And we kept our data exactly where it needed to stay.*

## The Architecture

<b>STORAGE</b>	On-premises Windows SMB file shares, with no data movement and no new storage to manage.
<b>IDENTITY</b>	Existing Active Directory and Microsoft Entra ID, with SSO and MFA enforced at the identity provider.
<b>PERMISSIONS</b>	NTFS remains authoritative; MyWorkDrive can't elevate access beyond what storage and identity already grant.
<b>ACCESS</b>	HTTPS through the browser, the mapped drive client (Windows File Explorer integration), or mobile apps. No expanded VPN required.
<b>AUDIT</b>	Access logs across hybrid storage, SIEM integration via Syslog, TLS 1.2+ on all communications.
<b>DATA RESIDENCY</b>	File content never persists on MyWorkDrive servers. PHI stays inside Sanford's environment, in line with HIPAA and internal compliance requirements.

### THE RESULTS

## \$14 Million In Identified Savings

**\$14M**

Identified Licensing Savings

**40k+**

Users Onboarded Without Disruption

## Where the savings came from

By giving users browser-based access to existing on-premises files—without licensing the full Microsoft 365 collaboration stack for everyone—Sanford identified roughly \$14 million in licensing savings. The alternative was a multi-year migration with uncertain compliance outcomes. The organization avoided that path altogether.

## Clinical adoption went smoothly

End-user resistance was minimal, and daily workflows weren't disrupted. The browser and mapped drive interfaces meant clinicians could keep their attention on patient care instead of learning something new.

## Security and leadership signed off quickly

Approval came faster than is typical in healthcare, where reviews routinely stretch for months. Reviewers pointed to product documentation and fit with Sanford's internal security requirements as the main reasons.

## Room to absorb acquisitions

Sanford's growth strategy includes acquisitions, and MyWorkDrive has scaled with that. New entities can access existing file shares without tenant connections, identity migrations, or data movement, turning what used to be a months-long integration into a permissions task.

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*We didn't just solve the licensing problem—we built a platform that scales with our acquisition strategy.*

## WHY MYWORKDRIVE

# The Right Architecture For A Regulated Enterprise

Sanford Health evaluated MyWorkDrive against four requirements: real cost reduction, no compromise on data residency, adoption without retraining, and a vendor responsive enough to support a large multi-state healthcare organization. MyWorkDrive met all four.

<b>BRING YOUR OWN STORAGE</b>	Files stay on Sanford's on-premises infrastructure—no migration, no new storage to manage, no data leaving the environment.
<b>LICENSE OPTIMIZATION</b>	Browser-based file access lets organizations right-size Microsoft 365 licensing, lowering per-user spend without cutting off access to the files people actually need.
<b>IDENTITY-NATIVE SECURITY</b>	Built on existing Active Directory, Entra ID, SSO, and MFA. NTFS permissions remain authoritative, and MyWorkDrive can't elevate access.
<b>FAMILIAR INTERFACES</b>	Browser, mapped drive (File Explorer integration), and mobile clients all use interfaces users already know.
<b>HIPAA-ALIGNED ARCHITECTURE</b>	PHI never persists on MyWorkDrive servers. TLS 1.2+ on all communications, audit logging across the environment, and a BAA available on request.
<b>M&amp;A-READY</b>	Acquired entities get access to existing file shares without tenant consolidation, data migration, or re-permissioning projects.
<b>A RESPONSIVE PARTNER</b>	The MyWorkDrive team supported Sanford through evaluation and implementation, with the documentation and turnaround required by a large healthcare buyer.

**READY TO EVALUATE**

## **Modernize File Access Without Moving Your Data.**

MyWorkDrive connects your users to the storage you already own over HTTPS, with SSO and MFA enforced at the identity provider—no VPN expansion, no migration, and no new storage to manage.

[Start a free 30-day trial at myworkdrive.com](https://myworkdrive.com)