ASPYRA VNA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: How does the cloud archive solution work?
A: It's an onsite-offsite archive solution that gives you real time access to your archived image data, while creating duplicate copies in the cloud.

Q: What do you mean by "onsite-offsite" and "cloud"?
A: We deploy an onsite server that we call the EDS Server. The EDS Server is tightly integrated with the PACS. It can act as your primary archive as well as automatically acquire study data from the PACS and creates duplicate copies in the cloud in real time, for long term data preservation and disaster recovery capability.

By cloud, we mean that we utilize a purpose built, hosted storage environment inside of Tier 3 data center facilities to store your offsite data copies. These facilities meet the most stringent data center facility specifications for uptime and security. These types of facilities are typically too large and expensive to construct and maintain for our customers. This gives you access to state of the art data center facilities without the cost and overhead of trying to build your own.

Q: How do you bill me?
A: Simple, it's a one-time fee for the life of the data. The one-time fee allows you to accurately predict your costs for archival storage over lengthy (7 tears plus) retention periods. Recurring long term data management, support and administrative costs are significantly reduced or eliminated with the cloud based archive solution. Future risks and costs associated with seemingly inevitable data migrations are also eliminated.

Q: Do I lose control of my data?
A: No, you own the data, we simply provide the specialized storage infrastructure necessary for long term data preservation.

Q: Is it secure?
A: Our solution meets the most stringent health care data security requirements on the planet. All transfers to and from the data centers are "double" encrypted, utilizing encrypted network connections on top of encrypted data sets. All data is stored encrypted in the cloud and we don't store the encryption keys, unless you want us to, as a backup.

Q: How do I get my data back if we decide to leave the service?
A: We define a fixed data return cost up front in the contract, based on capacity stored.

Q: Is the data usable, say 5, 10 or 15 years from now?
A: Yes, we adhere explicitly to the DICOM standard as written, so you will get 100% standards compliant data back at any time in the future.

Q: What if I change PACS vendors in the future?
A: Changing PACS vendors shouldn't have an effect on access to the archive, since we connect to virtually any PACS system through a simple DICOM interface. Using a vendor neutral archive should ensure that you won't have to do any more risky, costly data migrations.

Q: What do you mean "no more data migrations"?
A: Since your study data is stored in standards compliant format and the external archive is typically accessed via a DICOM interface, changing PACS vendors shouldn't require a complex data migration. Even if the new PACS vendor requires a complete ingestion of all the data and database entries from the archive, we have some simple straightforward processes for that as well. Your data is also automatically migrated to latest/greatest storage technologies in the deep archive as a background process. This automated migration process is transparent to the PACS.

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Q: What about my legacy data?
A: We can ingest all of your legacy image data into the archive for a low flat fee (or for no charge, depending on circumstances).

Q: What are restore times from the archive, if I have to retrieve from deep archive?
A: That depends on your internet speed/pipe. Typically a couple of minutes for a small study with a few images, up to 15 minutes or so for a large study with several hundred images. Remember though that you will only be accessing the deep archive in a DR scenario, or to access a very old study, since you typically have 5-7 years of onsite primary archival storage.

Q: Is it a backup solution?
A: The VNA is not inherently a data backup solution, since backup software applications are typically not designed for retention periods of seven plus years. The solution does meet the HIPAA Security Rule requirement to maintain exact retrievable copies of all patient data containing PHI.

Q: What about disaster recovery? Is this a DR solution? What about business continuity requirements in the Security Rule?
A: Yes, the VNA provides an excellent DR solution, since multiple copies of your image data are maintained in a secure offsite location. The EDS server can also be sized to hold your primary archive and virtually any viewing software can access study data directly from the EDS server during a temporary PACS outage using the DICOM interface.