



Strong Cybersecurity and HIPAA Compliance Program Positions CaringWays for Growth

CaringWays partners with Clearwater to help develop and implement a cloud-based security program for its AWS-based fundraising platform

The Problem

CaringWays is a privately-held fundraising platform that works with healthcare organizations and others to assist patients in raising funds to pay for needed medical services. As a cloud-based solution using Amazon Web Services (AWS), the CaringWays team knew it was imperative to build and implement cloud-based security best practices and controls into the platform's architecture.

The CaringWays platform handles a range of sensitive data—ePHI; personally identifiable information (PII) and financial information. The company also routinely engages with healthcare covered entities and related business associates to handle HIPAA covered data, and has a responsibility to ensure patient privacy and security remain top of mind.

Looking at building a cloud security program using existing team members and resources, President and Founder, Kristi Morrow said, "For us to have been able to build a team to have the variety of experience and skills that the Clearwater team brings to the table, we would have had to hire, I don't know, eight, 10, 12 different people to play all of these different roles."

The team also knew it faced an uphill battle related to the increasing number of security threats in healthcare. These challenges were further complicated by the rapid evolution and adoption of new technologies in the healthcare industry. As a result, the hospitals and healthcare providers CaringWays works with often see partners as an extension of themselves, and as a result, a potential point of exposure.

"The process today to go through the security questionnaires is much, much more difficult than it was five years ago, 10 years ago," Morrow said. "It's certainly layers-deep about actually how you're handling the data and how you're protecting the data."

The Solution

Clearwater had both the personnel and expertise to provide CaringWays with unified and transparent cloud security services. Clearwater delivered a comprehensive, continuous end-to-end AWS cloud security solution with configuration support for both infrastructure and identity management in its AWS environment.

Clearwater conducted an AWS security assessment based on AWS Foundational Security Best Practices v1.0.0, CIS AWS Foundation Benchmark v1.2.0, and the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF).

Next, Clearwater focused on developing and implementing a secure AWS architecture and ensuring controls worked effectively by conducting technical vulnerability assessments and penetration tests.

Clearwater also established and evaluated safeguards to detect and identify suspicious behaviors and potential attack characteristics and then made plans for remediation and mature CaringWays' security posture.

Clearwater and CaringWays ongoing partnership through Clearwater's ClearAdvantage managed service program includes ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and support.





About CaringWays

CaringWays, located in Brentwood, Tennessee, was founded with the sole focus of helping patients and their families get needed support from loved ones to pay for medical expenses. At the core of the technology-enabled fundraising solution, CaringWays works directly with healthcare providers and other organizations to help patients raise funds to pay medical bills and other healthcare-related expenses while giving donors confidence their gifts are used for their intended purpose.

About Clearwater

Clearwater, together with its CynergisTek subsidiary and TECH LOCK Division, helps organizations across the healthcare ecosystem move to a more secure, compliant, and resilient state so they can successfully accomplish their missions. We do this by providing a deep pool of experts across a broad range of cybersecurity, privacy, and compliance domains, purpose-built software that enables efficient identification and management of cybersecurity and compliance risks, and a tech-enabled, 24x7x365 Security Operations Center with managed threat detection and response capabilities.

Results

Clearwater leveraged its cloud-based platform expertise and broad security and risk management capabilities to deliver unmatched value to CaringWays as it addressed the company's AWS security concerns while helping it build a strong overall cybersecurity and HIPAA compliance program.

With the establishment of a secure AWS environment, including a hardened AWS "Red Zone" based on AWS Foundational Security Best Practices, and a dedicated team of experts continuing to manage the company's ongoing security and compliance needs, CaringWays is now better positioned to protect its assets, value, and the trust of its healthcare partners.

"We feel like we understand much better what's going on with our data," Morrow said. "And as we're making decisions, Clearwater is helping us weigh the pros and cons—the benefits and the risks—and helping us think through ways we can get done what we need to get done. What are the alternatives? How do you choose the best one for what you're trying to accomplish? That's allowing us to feel like we're in much better control of where we're headed."

Morrow said the company is now more confident in its ability to answer security questionnaires, which, as a startup, helps give them a leg up when competing against larger companies for new business.

What CaringWays Says

"Our partnership with Clearwater is a key part of our growth strategy as it reinforces to our hospital partners that CaringWays is committed to being a good steward of the patient data they maintain. By working with Clearwater and leveraging their expertise and software, we believe we've been able to transform HIPAA compliance and cybersecurity from a potential liability into a competitive advantage."

Kristi Morrow
President & Founder

Learn More

Whether you need help with risk analysis, responding to OCR, or a comprehensive approach to your cybersecurity and compliance program, we can help.