

The Customer

Virginia Commonwealth University
Health System

Industry

Healthcare Services

Number of Employees

7,400

Key Benefits

- * Consolidated payroll and benefits processing
- * Improved information access for employees
- * Ability to comply with industry regulations through strategic reporting capabilities

“Within only four months, UltiPro allowed us to extend our already complex payroll from 1,500 employees to more than 7,000. UltiPro is clearly smoothing the progress of integration and growth for our latest merger.”

Maria Curran

Vice President of Human Resources
VCU Health System



Company Profile:

The only academic medical center in central Virginia, the VCU Medical Center is on the forefront of healthcare, providing patients with the most progressive treatments and medical technology available. The medical center has been ranked among the top centers nationwide in U.S. News & World Report's America's Best Hospitals. The medical center's academic mission supports and is directly linked to Virginia Commonwealth University. VCU is ranked by the Carnegie Foundation as one of the nation's top research universities.

The Challenges:

Many teaching hospitals have merged with physician practice plans, independent physicians, and other hospitals to increase economic efficiencies and decrease massive marketplace competition. In early 2001, The Medical College of Virginia Hospital, one of the largest teaching hospitals in the U.S., merged with Medical College of Virginia (MCV) Physicians to form VCUHS—a unified entity that could provide more comprehensive medical services to patients.

The Medical College of Virginia Hospital required an HRMS that could easily integrate the 1,500 employees from MCV Physicians with its existing 5,500 employees. The goal was to operate as a unified corporate entity with streamlined business processes and communications.

Before this goal could become reality, the newly merged organization needed to tackle numerous challenges, including:

- **Disparate Systems:** The systems and infrastructure that were in place for both groups were completely different. The physicians' group was using an in-house payroll system while the hospital was using a combination of a mainframe payroll system for processing and a service bureau for printing checks.
- **Complex Payroll Needs:** VCUHS physicians receive income from two sources—one is teaching, research, and inpatient care, and the other is outpatient clinical services. Physicians at VCUHS also receive tax exemptions for their faculty practices. VCUHS needed a flexible payroll system to handle this range of complexities.

The Solution:

VCUHS interviewed other healthcare organizations to gain insight into various solution providers and to hear firsthand experiences and issues.

After an intensive review of several solutions—ranging from mainframe systems to outsourced service bureaus to Web-based solutions—VCUHS selected UltiPro from Ultimate Software and then activated the HR software solution in just four months.

Today VCUHS is operating efficiently as one enterprise—meeting the primary objective of the merger.

UltiPro allowed VCUHS to distinguish each of its three employee groups—hospital employees, practice plan employees, and residents—as separate component companies. This allowed each group to maintain different benefit packages and pay cycles while the HR team can report on the entire workforce as one entity.

An added value was realized as VCUHS began tracking volunteer productivity to gain a better understanding of overall manpower utilization.

This all-in-one view of the organization allows VCUHS to develop targeted budgets as well as plan for short- and long-range allocation of resources.

UltiPro also helped solve a major competitive issue for VCUHS by placing benefits information directly on the employee's paycheck. VCUHS sees this improved communication as a major benefit in the healthcare arena, where qualified employees often change jobs if another position has a perceived higher value regarding compensation and benefit packages.

With UltiPro, VCUHS unified all of its employee data rather than having the HR department use multiple databases from a variety of departments. As a result, VCUHS has more accurate and much faster reporting capabilities.

Before UltiPro, data on employee wages and benefits was reported only on a summary level. Now HR and payroll can create detailed reports in minutes for senior management with accurate, real-time data.

Plus VCUHS can more easily comply with requirements issued by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)—without relying on technical staff.

“We have already experienced substantial valuesince activating UltiPro. We’re now going to reexamine other areas to see how UltiPro can improve additional processes,” said Maria Curran, vice president of human resources at VCU Health System.