



Good Shepherd Medical Center is a 320 bed not-for-profit community hospital dedicated to creating a healthier future for the residents of Longview and the East Texas area. To ensure the continued well-being of their community, the Medical Center strives to provide quality, compassionate and comprehensive health related services to the whole person: body, mind and spirit. It has been recognized as being ranked in the **top 5 percent** of all hospitals nationally for overall **Orthopaedic** care by Health Grades.

The challenge the hospital faced was the need to get data out of its health care information system (HCIS) in a real-time manner so that the data could be instantaneously presented to the users on their desktops. The hospital decided to use a **web services** protocol to simplify the process of allowing applications to talk to each other. Web services would allow the hospital to integrate applications at a fraction of the cost of traditional middleware. Good Shepherd chose to develop this capability themselves rather than go the more traditional route of purchasing products that attempt to do this. They believe that packaged approaches to solving these types of problems are too restrictive and not flexible enough to satisfy the need facing the IT department. The hospital felt the way they reported out of their current HCIS system was fine for what it did; but that the reporting system could not be used for the more powerful, demanding, and immediate data requirements the users needed to do their jobs better.

The hospital chose a tool called **OpenGate** from the Westwood, MA firm, **Blue Elm**, to help them develop their web services capabilities. The solution was built on the **Microsoft .NET** platform and also uses Microsoft SQL Server. The implementation of OpenGate took only a matter of a few days. **Mark Moffitt**, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) has been very pleased with the results and went so far as to say “I wonder why more clients of our HCIS vendor are not doing similar things?”

Blue Elm is an 11 year old company, which servers over **450 MEDITECH facilities**, specializing in extracting data directly out of the highly complex and very sophisticated MEDITECH **hierarchical** database.