



# Proactive protection for people with behavioral & cognitive differences

Ensuring the reliability of nationwide behavioral healthcare

IBM Automation  
6-minute read

**D**evereux Advanced Behavioral Health is one of the nation's largest nonprofit organizations providing services, insight and leadership in the evolving field of behavioral healthcare. The organization is guided by its mission, which is to change lives by unlocking and nurturing human potential for people living with emotional, behavioral or cognitive differences.

Carrying out this mission depends on continuous information sharing and collaboration between teams of doctors, educators and other providers. Availability of accurate, up-to-date information is critical.

When Devereux faced challenges with its incident tracking and electronic health record (EHR) system, it implemented [IBM® SevOne Network Performance Management](#) software to improve insight into its systems and ensure greater reliability.

Devereux uses SevOne  
to proactively detect  
approximately

40%

of issues before end-user impact

Proactive detection  
of SAN capacity  
issues eliminates

3 hours

of downtime per incident



“We compared SevOne against other leading products. We clearly felt SevOne offered the best insight at the best cost.”

**Tom Shurer**, Vice President Information Resources,  
Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health

# Finding the right performance monitoring solution

Many of Devereux's business applications run from the company's data center in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, and are accessed over its national layer 2 fiber network.

Devereux's EHR and incident tracking systems are crucial to its business operations and mission. These tools allow the nonprofit to safely store health records, and help doctors and nurses, educational staff, caregivers and contractors share reports and notes, as well as document services delivered and progress observed.

"Communication among those involved in the care of our individuals is essential for positive treatment outcomes," says Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health Vice President of Information Resources Tom Shurer. "We are accountable for the safety and well-being of the individuals we serve – and their families. We need to exceed expectations and control for risks arising from possible disruptions in the availability of those systems."





Prior to deploying IBM SevOne NPM—and in response to user dissatisfaction with the performance of key business applications—Devereux contracted a third party, which conducted an infrastructure assessment. Devereux also initiated a review of four performance-monitoring solutions, including an incumbent.

Shurer and systems engineer David Sutton say they needed a monitoring solution that would help them be more proactive in detecting system performance issues.

“We faced an incredibly challenging issue with our systems,” explains Sutton. “One of our SAN volumes ran out of space due to anomalous database growth, resulting in three hours of down time.”

The team also struggled with generating effective network performance reports, which caused frequent challenges integrating new technologies.

“We had difficulty proactively monitoring our critical IT systems,” Shurer notes. “We needed to find a monitoring solution that would be an integral part of our daily IT workflow, helping us identify and address issues before they became problems.”

# Proactively protecting performance

Devereux chose IBM SevOne NPM as its long-term digital infrastructure management solution based on its ability to monitor all types of infrastructure in real time with highly granular visibility, and collect time series data with automatic baselining, thresholding and alerting capabilities.

IBM SevOne NPM has equipped Devereux—which is 99% virtualized and runs 832 VMs on 46 VMware hosts—with the confidence and tools to proactively address performance issues. “When planning architectural changes to our IT systems, we now have the ability to go back and consider history. We can use SevOne reports to create a before and after comparison, so we can say, with certainty, that those changes had an impact,” Shurer says.

Staff were also pleased with the thoroughness of the IBM SevOne NPM trial. During the infrastructure audit, multiple vendors provided Devereux with a proof of



concept, but only IBM SevOne NPM offered Devereux the ability to monitor all of its devices during the trial.

“SevOne came in and set up everything, and we had 30 days to try it out. With about one week left in the trial, we asked for another 30 days – and SevOne said ‘yes.’ By the time we decided on SevOne, it

was functional and already contributing to our process,” Shurer says.

Devereux now monitors about 24,500 objects, including Citrix and remote desktop services. “One month with SevOne and we were hooked,” says Sutton. “SevOne is far more intuitive than our previous solution.”

# Saving time and money, gaining insight

Previously, when one of its SAN volumes ran out of space, Devereux faced a three-hour system disruption. After implementing IBM SevOne NPM, Shurer's team built a SAN report to show the prior week's activity. They noticed an anomaly—one line on a graph that was clearly trending up. Yet again, a SAN volume was quickly filling to capacity.

"This time, with SevOne in place, we detected the SAN issue three hours in advance, instead of having a three-hour disruption," recounts Sutton.

When IBM SevOne NPM was first installed, the team noticed—through discards and errors on a port—that the backup server was using the default Microsoft Windows driver, rather than the driver they had concluded was optimal for their configuration. This was causing backup cycles to take longer than expected.



“Add all those little things together and it costs money and time,” says Sutton. “With SevOne, we estimate we’re catching 40% of the issues before significant end user impact. Prior to SevOne, that percent was almost zero.”

Devereux’s IT team has also enjoyed the ease of generating reports and graphs. Sutton, for example, has built reports to troubleshoot specific issues. “I pick an object, pick an indicator, hit detach, and in no time I can have a report with half a dozen or more graphs,” he says. “I’ve never worked with a solution where you can build meaningful reports so fast.

“We use reports to help us decide what alerts would be useful,” continues Sutton. “We have regular alert summary meetings to work together to spot patterns and fine-tune our alerts. With SevOne deployed, the number of preventable incidents is down. The team now utilizes much richer and more accurate baseline data, which better informs decisions.”

Shurer adds: “Previously, a significant amount of time was spent trying to figure out what went wrong. Opportunity was lost because our energy was used discovering underlying causes. Now, we have more insight.”

These positive results from the IBM SevOne NPM platform are just the beginning for Devereux. With less time needed to fight fires, the IT team—which includes 33 employees at headquarters and 22 local administrators nationwide—can rededicate themselves to innovation and proactive monitoring. Shurer hopes to achieve two goals in particular: enhance security and make a thoughtful and calculated move to the cloud.

“Security is a major issue for healthcare providers,” says Shurer. “SevOne allows us to focus more proactively on security since we don’t spend as much time troubleshooting performance issues.”

Another objective for the Devereux team is integration of IBM SevOne NPM alerts with its help desk ticketing system. Once the alert review and fine-tuning process is complete, the goal is to use the ticketing system to track network performance issues to resolution.

The Devereux team has been impressed with the solution’s intuitive nature and says it can easily incorporate the services into their own workflow. “I wish every company operated the way SevOne does,” notes Sutton. “They made implementation so much easier.”

“It’s now much easier to extend the solution on our own,” adds Shurer. “In fact, our existing FTEs now have more time to innovate.”

Sutton concludes: “From the initial engagement with SevOne, and our ongoing relationship, we’re confident that if we have an issue, it will be resolved.”



### About Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health

[Devereux](#) (external link) is one of the nation's largest nonprofit organizations providing services, insight and leadership in the evolving field of behavioral healthcare. Founded in 1912, the organization operates a comprehensive network of clinical, therapeutic, educational, and employment programs that positively impact the lives of tens of thousands of children, adults—and their families—every year.

### Solution component

- IBM® SevOne Network Performance Management

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