



Current Vulnerabilities and Threats Affecting Healthcare

Week of November 25, 2019

Dramatic Increase in Data Breaches

The healthcare sector has suffered over \$4 billion in data breaches and related remediation efforts. 93% of healthcare organizations were hit by a data breach in the last three years and 57% of those were hit more than once during that period. Since 2015, more than 300 million records have been stolen--affecting about 1 in every 10 healthcare consumers. These numbers shed light on the fact that healthcare enterprises continue to be the most vulnerable to exploitation and exceedingly susceptible to ongoing breaches.

School of Medicine Suffers Ransomware Attack

The University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Medicine notified 3716 of their patients whose names, addresses, health insurance information, social security numbers and credit card information may have been affected in a cyber phishing incident that occurred in September. An unauthorized third party gained access to several email accounts and the treatment received by those patients during their visit with a UNC physician. The UNC IT security team has since implemented a multi-factor authentication to increase security of emails and enhance employee training on phishing recognition and awareness.

Medical Images on the Internet

As of November 2019, there are 1.1 billion confidential medical images freely available on the internet. Research revealed several security vulnerabilities for the Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS) servers used by healthcare providers to store images of X-rays, CT, MRI and other medical scans. 786 million medical images were identified which included details of patient names, diagnosis, date of birth, and ID cards. In some of the images, even social security numbers were included. The U.S must take action to address this situation and remove all private accessible data from the internet.

Healthcare Records Exposed

Throughout this year, over 38 million health records were exposed in breaches. October had the largest number of data breaches in the healthcare sector. There were 52 data breaches reported that impacted hundreds of thousands of health records. This year has had three times the amount of data breaches that occurred in 2018 and seven times the amount reported in 2017. Two organizations with the highest number of records affected were Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers (152,000 records) and Kalispell Regional Healthcare (140,209 records).



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