Health Sector Coordinating Council
Cybersecurity Working Group

Health Industry Cybersecurity – Strategic Plan (HIC-SP)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the purpose of the HIC-SP?**
   Given the emerging trends in an increasingly complex and distributed health system and the associated cybersecurity threats, the Healthcare and Public Health (HPH) Sector Coordinating Council Cybersecurity Working Group (HSCC CWG) has prepared a forward-looking five-year HIC-SP that:
   • Projects major clinical, business, policy and technology trends in the HPH sector over the next five plus years;
   • Assesses how those trends may present continued or emerging cybersecurity challenges to the HPH sector; and
   • Recommends how the HPH sector and government should work together to prepare for those challenges with broad cybersecurity principles and specific actions.

   The HIC-SP serves as a compass to guide cybersecurity strategy, plans, and actions by individual organizations and the overall industry eco-system to help increase cybersecurity resilience within and outside organizational boundaries.

2. **Who is the intended audience?**
   C-suite executives, information technology and security leaders, and other relevant stakeholders can use the HIC-SP to plan investment in and implementation of strategic cybersecurity principles. These principles, when adopted among all HPH industry sub-sectors, will measurably reduce risks to patient safety, data privacy, and care operations, which can cause significant financial, legal, regulatory, and reputational impact.

3. **Who was involved in developing the plan?**
   The Health Industry Cybersecurity Strategic Plan (HIC-SP) is the result of 18 months of deep-dive working sessions involving 175 industry and government organizations across the health sector ecosystem, represented by senior cybersecurity, policy and clinical executives in and outside of the HSCC CWG membership. This collaboration process included four extensive in-person workshops and dozens of virtual assessments, consultations and drafting sessions between April 2022 to December 2023.

4. **Are all goals and objectives applicable to every HPH organization and industry sub-sector?**
   Much of the work done to identify industry trends and cybersecurity goals and objectives was done through the prism of unique subsector perspectives and business models. While all goals and objectives may not be applicable to every subsector, every organization should be able to "see themselves" and what actions they can take or influence to achieve *one or more goals and objectives* of the strategic plan.

5. **Why don't I see some of the current cybersecurity challenges and solutions being addressed in the plan (for example, asset management, vulnerability management, multifactor authentication and many more)?**
   While there are known cybersecurity challenges that exist and will continue to call for specific controls and tactics, the strategic plan attempts to look beyond current known challenges and anticipate unforeseen technological and operational shifts that a more flexible strategic planning approach can address in the context of future industry trends.

6. **Does the HSCC CWG believe this plan to be practical or achievable?**
   Yes, and the plan is meant to be bold, strategic, and a "north star." Active participation and support from each organization and support from their executives will be key to accomplishing the objectives of the plan. One of the principles of the strategic plan is that the *cybersecurity goals constitute a lifetime wellness plan that should not be limited by tactical constraints of habit or myopia*.

7. **How does an organization navigate the plan to understand what action(s) can be taken?**
   For every identified strategic plan objective, which may address one or more specific cybersecurity goals, sample measurable outcomes and actions are identified as a starting point. However, there may be alternative action(s) applicable based on where the organization is in terms of meeting the stated goal(s). The graphic below provides a sample approach of how an HPH organization might leverage the plan:
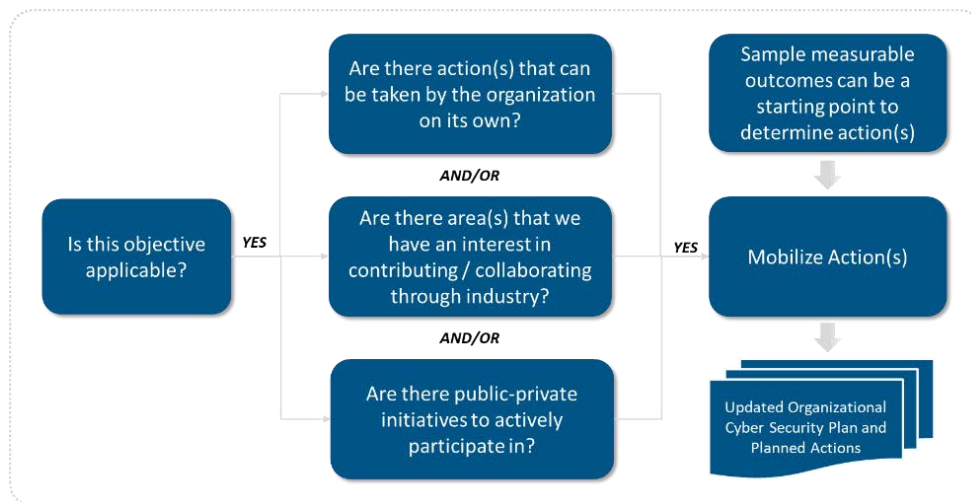
8. **How will we measure progress towards the HIC-SP?**
   Measuring the success of the strategic plan's implementation will take continued collaboration and ongoing commitment from industry and government HPH organizations. One of the mobilization efforts the CWG is already committed to is to continue discussion and collaboration on the "what and how" of implementation progress. We aim to measure micro and macro level metrics and assess overall industry progress on a regular basis against the goals and objective of the strategic plan.

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