



On the Edge

Cybersecurity Health of America's Resource-Constrained Health Providers

“On the Edge: Cybersecurity Health of America Resource-Constrained Health Providers” was prepared by the Health Sector Coordinating Council Cybersecurity Working Group and summarizes in-person interviews with 40 executives from resource constrained health providers in 30 states across the country, highlighting the increasing cyber threats to rural hospitals, critical access hospitals, FQHC's, small practices and many more. These providers face significant challenges in managing cybersecurity due to limited workforce and expertise, outdated systems, and insufficient funding. These resource-constrained healthcare providers are aware of the cybersecurity measures needed but lack the resources to implement them. They express a critical need for workforce augmentation, financial support, and partnerships to enhance cybersecurity and protect patient safety.

Background

- In 2024, there were 725 data breaches of 500 or more records, with 259 million healthcare records exposed.
- Breached healthcare information is up to 50 times more valuable than financial information.
- Ransomware attacks have led to increased medical complications in 36% of healthcare facilities.
- Only 14% of healthcare organizations have fully staffed IT security teams.

Challenges & Findings for Resource-Constrained Providers

- Insufficient and inflexible funding.
- Outdated legacy systems.
- Difficulty in attracting and retaining cybersecurity talent.
- Competing priorities and lack of formal security programs.
- Inadequate governance and conflicting government requirements.

Recommendations

- Workforce augmentation through federal funding and support from larger health systems.
- Non-profit health IT collaboratives to leverage economies of scale and shared expertise.
- CMS reimbursement incentives for implementing recognized cybersecurity practices.
- Regulatory and technical training for IT staff.

More information: <https://healthsectorcouncil.org/Cyber-Health-On-the-Edge>
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