
Uptick in Health Data Breaches



A new report from Protenus shows an increase in security incidents in March, with the number of patient records breached also on the rise. There were 39 breach incidents last month, affecting 1,519,521 patient records. The largest single incident involved 697,800 patient records and was reported to HHS as “theft-other”.

March, in fact, had more than 2.5 times the number of breached records in January and February combined, according to the Protenus Breach Barometer, a monthly snapshot of reported or disclosed breaches impacting the healthcare industry.

The bulk of the data breach incidents, 33 (84.6 percent), were reported by healthcare providers, four by health plans, one by a business associate or third party, and one was disclosed in a media report but has not been confirmed by the organisation, Protenus said. There could have been more incidents with third parties, but there was not enough information for a number of incidents to make that determination, Protenus added.

The latest report also indicates that insider threat at healthcare organisations continues to be a major cybersecurity problem. Insiders were responsible for 44 percent of March’s total breach incidents (17 incidents), affecting 179,381 patient records. Ten of the reported insider incidents were due to insider error. For the insider error incidents for which there are numbers, 14,219 patient records were affected. Seven of the reported incidents were the result of insider wrongdoing. There are numbers for five of these incidents, which affected 165,162 patient records, the Breach Barometer noted.

Further, hacking accounted for a significant percentage of records and incidents (11 incidents accounted for 28 percent of total incidents), the barometer found. Hacking incidents reported in March affected 600,270 patient records.

The 39 health data breaches in March occurred in 20 states, the report said. Texas had six incidents; Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, California and Missouri each had three incidents.

Source: [Healthcare IT News](#)

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