

# Cyberattack cripples major US health care network

May 10 2024, by Ernie Mundell

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Ascension, a major U.S. health care system with 140 hospitals in 19

states, announced late Thursday that a cyberattack has caused disruptions at some of its hospitals.

"Systems that are currently unavailable include our [electronic health records](#) system, MyChart (which enables patients to view their [medical records](#) and communicate with their providers), some phone systems, and various systems utilized to order certain tests, procedures and medications," Ascension said in the statement.

In some cases, [emergency care](#) is affected as well, with ambulances being diverted from certain medical centers, the St. Louis-based chain said.

"Several hospitals are currently on diversion for emergency medical services in order to ensure emergency cases are triaged immediately," Ascension said. "If you are experiencing a medical emergency, please contact 911 and your local emergency services will bring you to the nearest [hospital](#) emergency room."

Some non-emergency procedures, tests and appointments are also being postponed as Ascension deals with the cyber hack, which first came to light Wednesday as "Ascension detected unusual activity in our network systems," according to a statement.

"Our investigation and [restoration work](#) will take time to complete, and we do not have a timeline for completion," the nonprofit health care system said.

Ascension also runs more than 40 senior living facilities.

The cyberattack on Ascension is just one in a series that have hit U.S. health care organizations.

In February, Change Healthcare, a subsidiary of health care giant UnitedHealth Group, was hit by a ransomware attack that disrupted billing at pharmacies nationwide and compromised the [personal data](#) of up to a third of Americans, CNN reported.

To try to protect patients' data, UnitedHealth paid \$22 million to the criminals behind the attack, CEO Andrew Witty told Congress this month.

**More information:** Find out more about health care cybersecurity at the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#).

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Citation: Cyberattack cripples major US health care network (2024, May 10) retrieved 29 June 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2024-05-cyberattack-cripples-major-health-network.html>

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