
Nurses Demand Safety Precautions Amidst Ascension Ransomware Crisis



A nurses union in Michigan is urgently calling for the implementation of safety measures in response to a ransomware attack on the Catholic hospital network Ascension, which has caused significant disruption over recent weeks. The Local 40 union, representing staff at Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital, [has expressed grave concerns](#) about the challenges posed by the cyberattack, which has rendered patients' electronic medical records inaccessible.

Union's Petition Demands Critical Safety Measures from Ascension Leadership

In a formal petition addressed to Ascension CEO Joseph Impicicche and other organisational leaders, 118 union members have outlined several critical demands. These include improved communication systems, regular training sessions, weekly progress reports on recovery efforts, increased staffing, and a reduction in elective or non-emergency admissions. The union emphasises that these safety precautions are essential for safeguarding both hospital staff and patients during this challenging period. They stress the urgency for the hospital administration to take immediate action to address these concerns and prioritise safety and quality of care.

Ransomware Attack on Ascension Network Endangers Patient Care and Safety

The ransomware attack, which began around May 8, has impacted over 140 hospitals within the Ascension network, severely hampering their ability to deliver medications, manage patient needs, and conduct basic tests. The situation has prompted widespread concern among healthcare workers, who report using makeshift methods like Google Docs and text message chains to coordinate care. A nurse interviewed by CNN described the cyberattack as putting patients' lives in danger, highlighting the risks associated with delays in obtaining crucial medical information. Another nurse noted that delayed imaging tests for conditions such as strokes or heart attacks could be life-threatening.

Union Calls for Improved Communication, Training, and More Staffing

The union's petition calls for daily meetings within each unit to discuss patient care and safety protocols, alongside training sessions to navigate the daily challenges posed by the attack. Additionally, the union is demanding more frequent updates from Ascension regarding their recovery process. Despite a pledge from Ascension to make significant progress over the Memorial Day holiday, no updates have been provided since last week. Increased staffing is another critical demand, with the union arguing for a 4-to-1 nurse-to-patient ratio to better handle the crisis. Ascension's network, employing over 134,000 workers, managed 3.1 million emergency room visits last year across 19 states.

Ascension Faces Increased Scrutiny and Lawsuits

The petition comes amid growing scrutiny of Ascension, with patients in Texas, Illinois, and Tennessee filing class action lawsuits against the organisation for the leak of sensitive health information during the cyberattack. One plaintiff highlighted the ongoing harm caused by the attack, including difficulties in communicating with healthcare providers and accessing essential medical care.

The situation underscores the urgent need for Ascension to address the safety concerns raised by the Local 40 union and implement the demanded precautions to protect both patients and healthcare workers.

Source: [CNN](#)

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