

Independent health system, \$150M annual revenue, 1,200 employees, 150 active medical staff members, 20+ locations including a multi-site, multi-specialty physician practice, two diagnostics centers, cancer center, and two wellness centers, anchored by a 68-bed full service community hospital





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# Our Time Together • Pre-Incident Conditions • The Incident • The Response • The Legal Analysis • Preparing for an Incident • Lessening the likelihood of an incident

#### **Pre-Incident Conditions**



- Most Wired x 3
- Comprehensive HIPAA privacy and security program
- Board and C-Suite support for privacy and security
- Area ERs on diversion due to high census of flu patients
- Heading into a holiday weekend
- Inclement weather approaching

BLOOMINGTON

FOREWAYNE

BROWN

BRIFFON

BRICHMOND

DAYTON

MARTINSVILLE

GREENSBURG

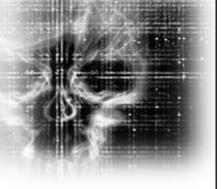
BLOOMINGTON

SEYMOUR

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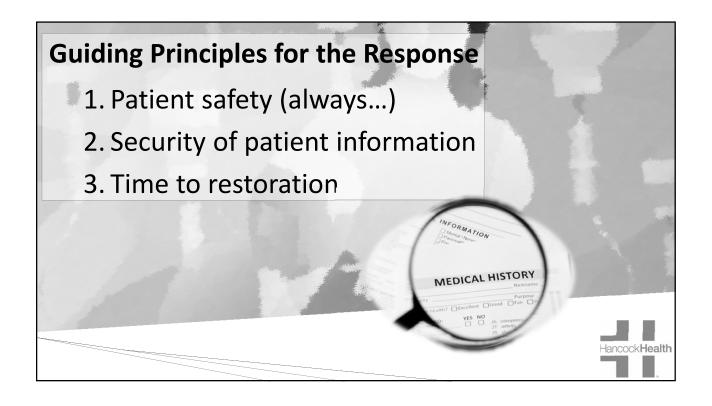
#### The Incident

- Thursday at 9:30 PM: Messages began appearing on PC screens in the hospital indicating that the system was encrypted with SamSam ransomware and that decryption keys could be purchased with four Bitcoin.
  - One week deadline or data would be encrypted permanently
  - Message included step-by-step instructions for obtaining the decryption keys









## **Response Steps**

- 1. Activate Disaster Response Plan
- 2. Initiate downtime procedures and stabilize patient care processes
- 3. Contact key parties (legal counsel, IT forensics, FBI)
- 4. Initiate IT forensic investigation
- 5. To pay or not to pay?



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## 1. Activate Disaster Response Plan

- Immediate shut down of all network and desktop systems
  - Manual process involving more than 1,200 units
  - Signs posted at all facilities noting all computers to remain off
- Incident command center established by executive leadership
  - Non-essential staff called-off
  - Communications by cell phone, text and non-system email









#### 2. Downtime Procedures and Patient Care

- · Ensured patient-facing equipment unaffected
- Patient care staff moved to paper documentation
- ER diversion only until processes established and stabilized
- Patient care continued throughout the incident:
  - Babies were born, surgeries were completed, patients were treated in ER and admitted, imaging and lab testing was performed...we did what a hospital does every day...





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## 3. Contact Key Parties

- Very early Friday morning: Leadership contacted legal counsel
- · Legal counsel engaged an experienced IT forensics firm
  - Will you be able to use your preferred firms?
- · Established schedule of calls to occur every two hours
  - Initial call cadence should be frequent, but can become less frequent as needs dictate.
- · FBI contacted and included on calls
  - FBI role is advisory and investigative



## 4. Initiate Forensic Investigation

- Four stages:
  - 1. Identification
  - 2. Containment
  - 3. Eradication
  - 4. Remediation
- Failure to follow this process could result in incomplete resolution and continuing incident.



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# Forensic Investigation (cont.)

- Review of logs determined that:
  - Attackers deployed ransomware through a vendor's remote desktop protocol (RDP) access credentials
  - Limited amount of access time
  - No additional accounts created on network
  - No lateral movement within network
  - No evidence of ePHI exfiltration
  - Ransomware was SamSam variant, which intelligence indicated seeks ransom payment only, not data acquisition



Remote Desktop

Connection

# 5. To Pay or not to Pay?

- FBI recommends not paying, as a deterrent
- Fact-sensitive determination
  - Do reliable backups of critical data exist?
  - How long will it take to restore from backups?
  - What is the value of time for the affected provider?
- Risks of payment:
  - Make yourself a future target
  - Don't get data back
  - The attackers ask for more money
- · Success of business model relies on "integrity" of attackers





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# To Pay or not to Pay? (cont.)

- Payment in form of Bitcoin
  - For most, it takes several hours to acquire Bitcoin.
  - Once Bitcoin is acquired, must go on the dark web to make payment to attackers.
    - Must follow instructions precisely
    - Use a secure device to conduct transaction
    - Bitcoin transactions are not instantaneous and can take an hour or more.
    - Then you wait for the attackers to provide the decryption keys





## To Pay or not to Pay? (cont.)

- Decryption keys
  - Could be one key or many keys
  - Decryption process takes time
- Restoring data and bringing systems back online is a slow and deliberate process (much slower???)
- · We will show a video of our Bitcoin transaction this evening



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## **Legal Considerations**

- State and federal laws potentially apply
- · State laws often focus on risk of identity theft
- HIPAA presumes a breach when Privacy Rule is violated
  - Is all ransomware an unauthorized access/disclosure?
  - Can overcome presumption if able to document that there is a low probability that PHI has been compromised
- Key Factors for ransomware incident:
  - Was ePHI or PII acquired or viewed?
  - Was data availability compromised?



# **Preparing for an Incident**

- Develop incident response plan
- Characteristics of an effective Incident Response Team:
  - Availability
    - Requires complete dedication to the task at hand
  - Selflessness
    - It's not about you, it is about getting it right. No egos allowed.
  - Delegation
    - Trust your team. You can't do it by yourself.
  - Honesty
    - Truth is integral to this process.









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# Preparing for an Incident (cont.)

- Practice implementing the response plan (table top exercise).
- Obtain cyberliability insurance.
  - Be sure you can utilize your preferred vendors for legal, forensics, credit monitoring, and mailing
  - Ensure coverage is adequate
- Ensure appropriate liability protections in vendor contracts.
- Enable detailed system and application logging.
- Strong day-to-day organizational dynamics and relationships are fundamental to success (marginal performance in good times means implosion during a crisis...)



# Lessening the Likelihood of an Incident

- Conduct enterprise-wide risk analysis
- Develop and implement remediation plan
- Regularly update and patch software and systems
- Implement multi-factor authentication
- Implement a vendor management program



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# **Lessening Incident Likelihood (cont.)**

- · Conduct regular workforce training
- Obtain independent third-party penetration testing
- Implement managed security services to monitor IT activity, vulnerabilities and risks





#### Resolution\*

- Thursday
  - 9:30 PM Cyber-Attack
  - 11:00 PM all systems shut down,
  - Midnight Incident Response Team in place
- Friday
  - Early AM attorneys, IT forensics team in progress
  - Mid-day Cylance installation in progress
  - Afternoon Ransom decision made
  - Evening Bitcoin procured
- Saturday
  - Early AM decryption keys acquired (i.e. ransom paid – 4 Bitcoin ~\$55,000)
  - Mid-morning file decryption begins

- Sunday
  - Morning
    - Servers & PCs operational
    - · Signs removed
  - Early evening Critical Systems on line
- Monday
  - Most systems operational

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- Within a few weeks all systems operational
  - Some Outlook calendar files unrecoverable...
  - \* Regular updates to employees, medical staff, and Board of Trustees throughout





