SANDBERG PHOENIX

LONG TERM CARE & SENIOR LIVING BLOG

Happy HIPAA Monday - Stolen Laptop + No Encryption = Provider Data Breach

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Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in LA reported a stolen employee laptop containing patient protected health information as well as social security numbers and other personal information of at least 500 patients. While the hospital has encryption policies, this laptop lacked encryption after a recent operating system upgrade. The hospital will mail letters this week to potentially affected patients and has notified all relevant regulatory agencies, but the situation underlines the importance of adequately protected patient information.

Last week, Community Health Services, Inc. reported hackers stole data of 4.5 million patients this year. Data protection is big business and a big concern for providers. Encryption is critical to protecting data and healthcare providers and administrators alike must ask if they are doing enough to safeguard their patients' vital information. After all, you never know when your laptop will be stolen.

By Denise Bloch

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