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IHA Strategic Partner: The Talent Ecosystem Approach to Staffing

With staffing a persistent issue for hospitals, [IHA Strategic Partner Medical Solutions](#) says adopting a “talent ecosystem” approach can meet short- and long-term staffing needs. Medical Solutions Chief Commercial Officer Chase Farmer discussed the components and benefits of a talent ecosystem versus quick fixes like contract labor in this Becker’s Hospital Review [article](#).

“We help fix the leaks in the internal talent pool so that next time, instead of an organization saying they need five nurses, they may only need two or three,” Farmer said, describing how an ecosystem focuses both on adding talent and helping hospitals understand why or if they even need the resources.

A talent ecosystem consists of services, strategy and technology—all working together to give hospitals and health systems multiple channels of talent. At the same time, the ecosystem approach leads to better insights about current and future staffing needs, as well as greater control over costs.

Unlike traditional staffing strategies, a talent ecosystem looks toward hospitals’ long-term success, supplying talent and acting as a strategic advisor.

[Medical Solutions](#), an IHA Strategic Partner since 2018, is a leading healthcare talent ecosystem provider. Contact Mike Daeges at 402-986-5153 or mike.daeges@medicalsolutions.com to learn more about Medical Solutions.

[Contact us](#) with questions.

FBI, CISA and MS-ISAC: Actions to Defend Against Cybercriminals

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recently joined the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) and the Australian Signals Directorate’s Australian Cyber Security Centre to release a joint [Cybersecurity Advisory](#) (CSA) to disseminate indicators of compromise (IOCs), tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), and detection methods associated with LockBit 3.0 ransomware exploiting CVE-2023-4966, known as Citrix Bleed. Citrix Bleed allows threat actors to bypass password requirements and multifactor authentication (MFA), leading to successful session hijacking of legitimate user sessions on Citrix NetScaler web application delivery control (ADC) and Gateway appliances. Through the takeover of legitimate user sessions, malicious actors acquire elevated permissions to harvest credentials and access data and resources.

The CSA said that historically, LockBit 3.0 affiliates have conducted attacks against multiple critical infrastructure sectors, including healthcare. CISA and the authoring organizations strongly encourage network administrators to apply the mitigations found in the CSA, which include isolating NetScaler ADC and Gateway appliances and applying necessary software updates through the [Citrix Knowledge Center](#). The authoring organizations also encourage network defenders to hunt for malicious activity on their networks using the detection methods and IOCs within the CSA.

The FBI and CISA also recently issued a joint [CSA](#) to alert healthcare and other critical infrastructure to recent activity by Scattered Spider cybercriminal group. Scattered Spider uses social engineering techniques and legitimate remote access tools

to compromise victim networks, extort ransom and steal data. [View the CSA](#) for a detailed overview of Scattered Spider TTPs. Recommended actions to mitigate this malicious cyber activity are highlighted in the CSA, including:

- Maintaining offline backups of data;
- Enabling and enforcing phishing-resistant MFA; and
- Implementing application controls to manage and control software execution.

The FBI, CISA and MS-ISAC has also issued a joint [CSA](#) providing detail on Rhysida ransomware indicators of compromise and TTPs that have been identified through investigations as recently as September 2023. Rhysida ransomware has been deployed against the healthcare sector and other critical industry, targeting victims around the world and publishing stolen files online. The CSA underscores that hospitals are among the group's "targets of opportunity," with ransomware attacks that result in significant disruptions and delays to healthcare delivery.

Organizations are encouraged to implement the recommendations in the [mitigations](#) section of the CSA, including:

- Prioritizing remediating known exploited vulnerabilities;
- Enabling MFA for all services to the extent possible, particularly for webmail, virtual private networks and accounts that access critical systems; and
- Segmenting networks to prevent the spread of ransomware.

FDA: Two Recent Class I Recalls of Syringes and Syringe Pumps

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently identified two Class I recalls due to the potential for serious injury or death. Fresenius Medical Care has [recalled](#) over 12 million single-use sterile syringes due to leakage. The use of affected syringes may cause serious adverse health consequences, including blood stream infection (sepsis), or blood loss due to leakage.

Over 2,000 syringe pumps were also [recalled](#) recently by Baxter Healthcare Corporation because the pump may indicate an infusion is complete when it is not. People treated with the infusion pump might not get enough of the fluids they need, or time-sensitive treatment could be delayed. Underdosing or delays could lead to serious adverse health consequences, especially for people receiving life-sustaining medications. In high-risk populations, insufficient fluid delivery could lead to death.

COVID-19 Information

Since the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on May 11, the Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) is releasing updated COVID-19 data every other week. [Click here](#) for the most recent hospitalization update. IDPH will continue to report the weekly number of people with COVID-19 admitted to hospitals from emergency departments, deaths and vaccinations, as well through the dashboard of the [Illinois Wastewater Surveillance System](#).

In a recent IDPH [news update](#), the Department reported that 20 Illinois counties are listed at medium level for hospitalizations as of Nov. 11, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national COVID-19 data tracker. Across the state, 740 hospitalizations were recorded, a 17% increase from the previous week. The uptick in COVID-19 hospitalizations comes as hospital data is also showing increases in flu and RSV.

IDPH said it encourages all healthcare settings to consider masking in patient care areas, especially if caring for those with weakened immune systems. The Department said that per CDC recommendations, "Universal masking should be considered facility-wide or, based on a facility risk assessment, targeted toward higher risk areas (e.g., emergency departments, urgent care) or patient populations (e.g., when caring for patients with moderate to severe immunocompromise) during periods of higher levels of community COVID-19 or other respiratory virus transmission."

Briefly Noted

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [has recalled](#) three additional brands of whole and pre-cut cantaloupes, following a

significant increase in people sickened or hospitalized due to salmonella. As of Friday, 99 people across the nation have reported illness linked to the cantaloupes, with four reported illnesses in Illinois. The FDA is reporting 45 related hospitalizations and two deaths.

The FDA has also updated its information on the agency's ongoing investigation into elevated lead levels in certain cinnamon applesauce pouches. As of Wednesday the agency has received 52 reports of elevated lead levels among children who reportedly consumed the recalled products. NBC News reported it is an increase from the 34 cases reported the previous week.

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