

MEDIA NOTICE – DATA BREACH NOTIFICATION

Re: DATA BREACH NOTIFICATION- Rhea Medical Center
Business Associate, Nationwide Recovery Service, Inc.
Breach of Personally Identifiable Information Notice Internal Breach

HIPAA requires notice to individuals when there has been a breach of their protected health information. You are receiving this notice as a part of Rhea Medical Center's compliance with HIPAA.

Nationwide Recovery Service ("NRS") is a business associate of Rhea Medical Center that provides debt collection services for delinquent accounts of patients treated at Rhea Medical Center. In July 2024, NRS discovered suspicious activity related to certain systems which resulted in a network outage. They immediately took steps to secure their environment and launched an investigation to determine the nature and scope of the activity. The investigation determined there was unauthorized access to the NRS network between July 5, 2024 and July 11, 2024, and that certain files and folders were copied from their systems. As a result, NRS began a review of the systems which contained these files and folders to determine what information they contained and to which NRS client the information belongs. This review was recently completed and NRS has notified Rhea Medical Center because they determined that information related to individuals associated with Rhea Medical Center are potentially impacted as a result of this incident.

What Information Was Involved?

The breached data may have included names, addresses, Social Security numbers, financial information and medical information. At this time, we have no evidence of the misuse of your personal information. However, in the interest of caution, we wanted to make you aware of the incident so you can take the necessary precautions.

What We Are Doing

We have taken the following steps to address the situation and prevent future occurrences:

- Rhea Medical Center's HIPAA Privacy Officer promptly notified their attorney and the Privacy Officer began an investigation, both internally and externally, of the reported "incident" to determine the extent of the breach, the notification periods and requirements, and determined the need for additional resources to comply with the Breach Notification Rule.
- While the Rhea Medical Center HIPAA investigation continues, we are in the process of notifying potentially impacted patients by this media publication and will be providing written notification to 8,309 patients at their last known addresses.

What You Can Do

We recommend that you take the following actions to protect your personal information:

- Review your account statements and credit reports for any suspicious activity.
- Consider placing a fraud alert or security freeze on your credit file.

- Report any suspicious activity to the relevant financial institution and law enforcement.
- Monitor your credit. By law, you can obtain a free credit report each year from each of the three credit reporting agencies. These agencies include Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.
- AnnualCreditReport.com is the only website authorized by the federal government to issue free, annual credit reports from the three credit reporting agencies. You may request your reports:

Online by visiting AnnualCreditReport.com

By calling 1-877-322-8228 (TTY: 1-800-821-7232)

By filling out the Annual Credit Report request form and mailing it to:

Annual Credit Report Request Service

PO Box 105281

Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

For More Information

Rhea Medical Center sincerely regrets that this has happened and apologizes for any inconvenience this breach may have caused our patients. Rhea Medical Center is committed to providing quality patient care, including protecting your personal information.

Should you have any questions, please contact our HIPAA Privacy Office by phone at 1-877-891-0986.