September 5, 2013

MUSC Community
Medical University of South Carolina

Re: Blackhawk cyber theft

Dear Colleagues:

On August 22, 2013, MUSC Physicians was notified that its third party credit card payment vendor, Blackhawk Consulting Group, had discovered a malicious attack on its software. This intrusion compromised personal information of approximately 7,000 MUSC patients and/or the persons who paid their bills online with a credit card (MUSC Physicians) and those persons who paid a bill over the phone with a credit card (MUSC Physicians and MUSCHealth). Persons affected by this breach paid their bills online between June 30, 2013 and August 21, 2013. People who paid with a credit card in person and people who paid an MUSC Physicians bill by check or cash are not affected.

On August 22, MUSC was notified by a third part credit card processing vendor, Blackhawk Consulting Group, that we were victims of a cyber-theft of personal information involving approximately 7,000 individuals who used a credit card online or via telephone to pay for health care services. Forensic discovery of this kind typically takes multiple days in order to provide a thorough and accurate assessment of what happened and to complete system repairs. We’ve been advised by Blackhawk that this crime was reported to the FBI and that investigation continues, as there may have been other Blackhawk clients affected. We will continue to work diligently with our business partner to fully resolve this situation.

Information that was compromised by the criminals included names, addresses, credit card numbers, credit card security numbers and email addresses. Based on the information we have received to date, information that was not compromised includes dates of birth, social security numbers, health information and medical information numbers.

As always, our patients’ safety and security remains our top priority and we are underway with creating messaging to notify our patients and/or financially responsible parties of this crime. We are working with Blackhawk and Experian’s Fraud Protection program to launch a support system that will provide free credit monitoring and counseling through a customized call center to walk concerned persons through the steps they should take to further protect their personal information.

For more information now and as it becomes available, please visit www.musc.edu/cyberinfo. Thank you for all you do for MUSC and your continued efforts to make sure that all MUSC-related information is safe and secure.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Sothmann, Ph.D.
Interim President
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

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