

Notice of Data Loss Incident

Queen Creek Medical Center dba Desert Wells Family Medicine (“Desert Wells”) is notifying patients whose information may have been involved in a recent ransomware and data loss incident.

On May 21, 2021, Desert Wells experienced a ransomware incident that impacted many of its IT systems. Upon detecting suspicious activity on its network, we moved quickly to investigate and respond. Desert Wells immediately engaged cyber security experts and a leading incident response team to assess, contain, and remediate any damage caused by the incident. Federal law enforcement was notified, and a third-party IT forensics firm launched an investigation to determine what, if any, information was accessed and acquired by the unauthorized individual.

After a comprehensive evaluation, the independent firms did not find evidence that any sensitive data was taken; however, the unauthorized individual who accessed the network corrupted the data and patient electronic health records in Desert Wells’ possession prior to May 21, 2021 are unrecoverable despite our exhaustive efforts to try to recover our patients’ sensitive information. While backups were in place, that data was also corrupted by the unauthorized individual.

This information in the involved patient electronic health records may have included patients’ names in combination with their address, date of birth, Social Security number, driver’s license number, patient account number, billing account number, health insurance plan member ID, medical record number, dates of service, provider names, and medical and clinical treatment information. To date, the independent firms have discovered no evidence that that any of the information involved has been or will be misused.

Desert Wells will continue to expend every effort to rebuild patients’ electronic health records in a new and enhanced electronic medical record system. This includes compiling our patients’ data from other sources, including from medical specialists, previous medical providers, hospitals, pharmacies, imaging centers, and labs, among others. We will request that patients update necessary forms during this process.

Desert Wells is beginning to mail notification letters to involved individuals and will be providing them with information about this incident and guidance on how they can help protect their information. While there is no indication that any data has been used to commit fraud or identity theft, Desert Wells is providing complimentary credit monitoring and identity theft protection services to patients. Patients also are encouraged to review statements from their healthcare providers or health insurers and contact them immediately if they see any medical services they did not receive.

We regret any concern or frustration this incident may cause our patients, and we are continuing to take steps to enhance the security of our systems, including by implementing enhanced endpoint detection and 24/7 threat monitoring, and providing additional training and education to our staff. Individuals with questions may contact the confidential, toll-free inquiry line at 1-833-903-3648 from 6 am to 6 pm PT, Monday through Friday. More information is available on our website: Desertwellsfamilymedicine.com.