

# Rural Cybersecurity

## Ransomware attacks impacting rural hospitals have increased from 2016 to 2021:

From 2016-2021, 43 rural hospitals across 22 states experienced a ransomware attack.



of ransomware attacks on rural hospitals resulted in operational disruptions including:

- Electronic system downtime (81%)
- Delays or cancellations in scheduled care (42%)
- Ambulance diversion (33%)

Ransomware attacks disruptions are more detrimental in rural areas given the greater distances patients must travel to receive care and the outsized impact that lost revenue may have on rural hospital finances.



### Rural Cybersecurity Support Resources

#### Microsoft Cybersecurity Program for Rural Hospitals

A collaboration between Microsoft and the National Rural Health Association, among others, offers rural hospitals access to Microsoft security solutions, resources, and training at no cost.

#### Google Rural Healthcare Cybersecurity Initiative

Aims to help rural health systems and hospitals strengthen their resilience to cyberattacks. Google is partnering with government and industry to offer its solutions to rural health facilities at no cost or a significant discount.



### NRHA Legislative Proposals

#### Small Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP)

Provide additional funding to the SHIP program, which currently assists rural hospitals with purchase of HIT and equipment, to support small rural hospital readiness against cybersecurity attacks.

#### S. 2169: Rural Hospital Cybersecurity Enhancement Act

*Sens. Hawley (R-MO), Hassan (D-NH), Kelly (D-AZ)*

Requires the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to develop and annually report to Congress about a workforce development strategy to address the unmet need for cybersecurity professionals in rural hospitals. Additionally, CISA must disseminate materials that rural hospitals may use to train staff about cybersecurity.