

# Rural Cybersecurity

There have been an increasing number of ransomware attacks impacting rural hospitals 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

### The 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's 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

### The Small Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP)

Provide additional funding to the SHIP program, which is used to assist rural hospitals with purchase of HIT and equipment, among other activities, to support small rural hospital readiness against cyber security attacks.

### Rural Hospital Cybersecurity Enhancement Act

(S.1560 in the 118th Congress)

*Sens. Hawley (R-MO), Peters (D-MI), Ossoff (D-GA), Warnock (D-GA), Rosen (D-NV), and 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.