# Major Data Breach Hits Australian Online Prescription Service and U.S. Healthcare Sector



### Major Data Breach at Australian Online Prescription Service

On Thursday, May 16, 2024, a significant data breach was reported involving MediSecure, Australia's largest online prescription service. MediSecure, based in Melbourne, confirmed that its website and hotline were rendered offline following a ransomware attack. The company is working with the Australian Digital Health Agency and national cyber security coordinator to address the issue.

Authorities, including the Australian Signals Directorate’s Australian Cyber Security Centre and the Australian Federal Police, are investigating the breach. No group has claimed responsibility, and no data has yet been leaked online.

Care O'Neil, Australia's cyber security minister, and Lieutenant General Michelle McGuinness, the national cyber security coordinator, are coordinating governmental response efforts.

The breach raises concerns over cybersecurity in the healthcare sector, a point echoed by industry experts and the Australian Medical Association president Steve Robson. MediSecure, founded in 2009, indicated that the breach might have originated from a third-party vendor.

This incident follows previous significant cyberattacks on healthcare providers, such as the October 2022 breach of Australia's largest health insurer, Medibank, and a recent attack on St Vincent’s Health.

### U.S. Healthcare Cyberattacks

In recent months, the U.S. healthcare system has also experienced ransomware attacks, notably affecting Change Healthcare and Ascension. These breaches have disrupted patient care, including ambulance services and pharmacy operations, highlighting vulnerabilities in the system's cybersecurity.

Despite federal and private sector efforts to mitigate damage, experts and lawmakers call for mandatory cybersecurity standards in the healthcare sector to prevent further incidents. A proposed bill aims to enforce minimum cybersecurity requirements for healthcare providers and their contractors.

The Biden administration is preparing regulations for hospital cybersecurity, although some organizations, like the American Hospital Association, oppose these measures.

In conclusion, both Australia and the United States have witnessed severe impacts on their healthcare sectors due to burgeoning cyber threats, emphasizing the need for robust cybersecurity protocols.