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Notice of Data Event

May 16, 2023 Essen Medical Associates, P.C. (“Essen”) is providing preliminary notice of a recent data event that may impact the privacy of certain individuals’ personal information and/or protected health information (“PHI”). Although we are unaware of any occurrences of identity theft or fraud resulting from this incident, we are providing information about the incident and our response out of an abundance of caution.

What Happened. On March 17, 2023, Essen learned that an unauthorized actor may have accessed its systems and obtained a limited amount of information. Upon discovering this incident, we immediately launched an investigation and began working with third-party cybersecurity specialists to determine the nature and scope of the incident. We also notified federal law enforcement. While the investigation is currently ongoing, the analysis to date confirmed that an unauthorized actor accessed certain Essen systems between March 14, 2023 and March 22, 2023 and may have accessed or copied certain information maintained within the Essen environment. The electronic health system that Essen uses for storage of medical records was not affected.

Our investigation of this incident is ongoing, and the extent and scope of PHI or other personal information that may have been stored on the impacted Essen systems has not been confirmed at this time. We are working with subject matter specialists to review the potentially impacted data and determine what, if any PHI or other personal information may have been accessed or acquired without authorization and to whom that information may relate. We will supplement this notification with additional information once the review process has completed.

The Essen systems impacted by this incident may store information relating to Essen and certain Essen affiliates. While the investigation continues, we are providing this notice out of an abundance of caution to provide guidance about steps individuals can take to protect their information, should they choose to do so.

What Information Was Affected. Our investigation to confirm the exact information impacted by this incident is ongoing. The specific types of information that may have been accessible to the unauthorized actor could include name, date of birth, Social Security number, government issued identification or passport information, other demographic information, and/or personal/health information. Essen’s electronic health records system was not affected by this incident.

What We are Doing. We take the security of the information in our care very seriously. Upon learning of this incident, we moved quickly to investigate and respond to the incident and took steps to further secure our environment. We also notified federal law enforcement.

What Affected Individuals Can Do. As a best practice, and although we are unaware of any such activities resulting from this incident, individuals are encouraged to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft or fraud by reviewing account statements and explanations of benefits for unusual activity. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the appropriate insurance company, health care provider, or financial institution. Additional resources can be found below in the *Steps You Can Take to Protect Personal Information*.

For More Information. If you have additional questions, you may contact our dedicated assistance line toll-free at (866) 347-5981. This toll-free line is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern Time (excluding major U.S. holidays). You may also write to Essen at **2614 Halperin Ave, Bronx, NY 10461.**

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Monitor Your Accounts

Under U.S. law, a consumer is entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. To order your free credit report, visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. You may also directly contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below to request a free copy of your credit report.

Consumers have the right to place an initial or extended “fraud alert” on a credit file at no cost. An initial fraud alert is a 1-year alert that is placed on a consumer’s credit file. Upon seeing a fraud alert display on a consumer’s credit file, a business is required to take steps to verify the consumer’s identity before extending new credit. If you are a victim of identity theft, you are entitled to an extended fraud alert, which is a fraud alert lasting seven years. Should you wish to place a fraud alert, please contact any one of the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below.

As an alternative to a fraud alert, consumers have the right to place a “credit freeze” on a credit report, which will prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information in the credit report without the consumer’s express authorization. The credit freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. However, you should be aware that using a credit freeze to take control over who gets access to the personal and financial information in your credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application you make regarding a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, you cannot be charged to place or lift a credit freeze on your credit report. To request a security freeze, you will need to provide the following information:

1. Full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security number;
3. Date of birth;
4. Addresses for the prior two to five years;
5. Proof of current address, such as a current utility bill or telephone bill;
6. A legible photocopy of a government-issued identification card (state driver’s license or ID card, etc.); and
7. A copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft if you are a victim of identity theft.

Should you wish to place a credit freeze, please contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below:

Equifax	Experian	TransUnion
https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/	https://www.experian.com/help/	https://www.transunion.com/credit-help
888-298-0045	1-888-397-3742	1 (800) 916-8800
Equifax Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 105069 Atlanta, GA 30348-5069	Experian Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016
Equifax Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 105788 Atlanta, GA 30348-5788	Experian Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 160, Woodlyn, PA 19094

Additional Information

You may further educate yourself regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, credit freezes, and the steps you can take to protect your personal information by contacting the consumer reporting bureaus, the Federal Trade Commission, or your state Attorney General. The Federal Trade Commission may be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580; www.identitytheft.gov; 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); and TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The Federal Trade Commission also encourages those who discover that their information has been misused to file a complaint with them. You can obtain further information on how to file such a complaint by way of the contact information listed above. You have the right to file a police report if you ever experience identity theft or fraud. Please note that in order to file a report with law enforcement for identity theft, you will likely need to provide some proof that you have been a victim. Instances of known or suspected identity theft should also be reported to law enforcement and your state Attorney General. This notice has not been delayed by law enforcement.

For New York residents, the New York Attorney General may be contacted at: Office of the Attorney General, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341; 1-800-771-7755; or <https://ag.ny.gov/>.