



## MEDIA ADVISORY FROM HEALTHCARE READY

Contact: Laura Perillo  
Media Rep for Good Causes  
Representing: [Healthcare Ready](#)  
(908) 406-3413 (Text OK); [laura@shoestringagency.org](mailto:laura@shoestringagency.org)

### **Healthcare Ready monitoring patient access to pharmacies and insurance claims following Optum/Change Healthcare ransomware attack**

Special note to journalists: Healthcare Ready’s associate director of programs and response [Julie Abrams](#) is available for comment. Please contact Laura Perillo to request an interview at [laura@shoestringagency.org](mailto:laura@shoestringagency.org) or 908-406-3413 (call or text). Sign up [here](#) for future situation reports from Healthcare Ready.

**WASHINGTON, March 7, 2024** – Amidst the aftermath of the Feb. 21 [Optum/Change Healthcare ransomware attack](#), pharmacies of all types, including those within hospitals, are continuing to alert customers about resulting prolonged wait times. Disruption issues include insurance billing challenges and problems with prescription discount codes. [Healthcare Ready](#) — a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring patient access to healthcare in times of disasters — is monitoring attack repercussions with an emphasis on pharmacy and patient care access nationwide [through the organization’s “Alert Hub” reports](#).

Although it appears a [\\$22 million ransom payment](#) was recently given to the hackers behind this attack, disruptions of Optum/Change Healthcare services are still affecting benefit and processing claims, including blocking access to Medicaid operations.

“The longer the outage lasts, the more processing claims will be backlogged which could exacerbate delayed access to medications,” said Abrams. “We are working to provide patients and pharmacies with the most up-to-date information about how this ransomware attack may affect individuals’ access to healthcare.”

Healthcare Ready assists in coordinating public and private partners, including federal agencies involved in disaster response, state emergency operations centers, and health systems — hospitals, clinics, and Community Health Centers — to assess healthcare needs and impacts by:

- Connecting needs and resources between nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), nonprofits, and shelters for supplies/medicines, and donations
- Assessing potential risks to critical infrastructure and healthcare supply chains
- Sharing resources and state-specific information to assist healthcare facilities, communities, and individuals
- Intelligence gathering and situational reporting

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### **About Healthcare Ready**

[Healthcare Ready](#) is a nonprofit organization that serves as a public-private nexus to prevent patient care disruptions amid crises. We do this by forging partnerships and serving as the linkage point between the healthcare supply chain and government. By working with supply chain stakeholders, emergency management, patient advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, we help safeguard patients before, during, and after crises by leveraging our core capabilities. For more information, visit [healthcareready.org](http://healthcareready.org) or on Twitter @HC\_Ready.