Illinois Health and Hospital Association

Statewide Exercise Tested Readiness for Evolving Threats to Patient Care, Communications and Hospital Operations

NAPERVILLE – Cyberattacks against healthcare organizations put patient care, communications and essential hospital operations at risk. To strengthen preparedness, the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) brought together teams from more than 115 Illinois hospitals and health systems on Wednesday for an emergency preparedness exercise simulating a sophisticated cyberattack amplified by artificial intelligence (AI).

The live, virtual event entitled, “Broken Trust: AI Takes Control,” marked a historic milestone as the largest AI-focused hospital and healthcare system exercise ever conducted in Illinois. The simulation immersed multi-disciplinary hospital teams in an evolving cyber incident where AI was weaponized to manipulate trusted information, disrupt the healthcare workforce, and create cascading impacts across clinical and business operations.

“Protecting patient care must remain at the center of our preparedness efforts as cyber threats against healthcare organizations continue to evolve,” said A.J. Wilhelmi, IHA President and CEO. “Exercises like this give hospital teams an opportunity to test their response plans, strengthen coordination and identify vulnerabilities before a crisis occurs. This preparation is essential to keeping patients safe and sustaining the services our communities depend on.”

The live webinar was held on Nov. 4 and led by IHA’s Keneatha Johnson, MPH, Assistant Vice President, Safety and Emergency Preparedness and Stephen Weiler, IPEM, MEP, CPP, CPD Manager of Resiliency Services with Tarian Group.

About IHA

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association, with offices in Chicago, Naperville, and Springfield, advocates for Illinois’ more than 200 hospitals and nearly 40 health systems as they serve their patients and communities. IHA members provide a broad range of services—not just within their walls, but across the continuum of healthcare and in their communities. Reflecting the diversity of the state, IHA members consist of nonprofit, investor-owned and public hospitals in the following categories: community, safety net, rural, critical access, specialty, and teaching hospitals, including academic medical centers. For more information, see www.team-iha.org. Like IHA on Facebook. Follow IHA on X (formally known as Twitter).