

PETER CHRISTENSEN HEALTH CENTER



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PCHC NOW FULLY OPEN

After weeks of struggle and frustration – for PCHC staff and patients – we can finally announce that PCHC is once again fully operational. All of our health services are available to our patients. Our recovery from the May 13th cyber attack took somewhat longer than originally anticipated, but it was imperative that we take all necessary measures to ensure that our computer system is safe and fully restored.

When the cyber terrorists attacked our system, they basically encrypted our digital information. Fortunately, the information was already encrypted by our system as a cyber security measure, before the terrorists invaded. As a Tribal Council Member described the situation, it was as if our information was in our vault, and the terrorists took the vault and put it in their vault, so that we couldn't get to it. The digital information that was made inaccessible to us included electronic patient health records, employee information, policies and procedures, and all documents. We received a digital ransom demand from a group of cyber terrorists based in a small foreign country. They indicated that they would only unencrypt our data if we paid them a sum of money in bitcoin. Experts that we hired to negotiate with the terrorists were concerned that, even if we paid the terrorists, it was unlikely that our data would be unencrypted. Fortunately, we were able to circumvent the efforts of the terrorists, and a ransom payment was not necessary. Our IT staff determined that there was a way to get around what they had done, and were able to regain access to our data.

A forensic computer investigation company that we hired to ensure that our computer system is secure spent weeks scanning all of our systems and data. That process is now complete, and it has been determined that our system and data are safe, with no indication that the terrorists have any further ability to get in. More important, the terrorists were not able to access, view, take or unencrypt any of our encrypted data, including patient information.

Our patients have been amazing during these past difficult weeks. We know how inconvenient this process has been for them, and we will be forever grateful for the support and understanding that they have shown. We pledge that we will work harder than ever to provide the high quality health care that our patients deserve, and to ensure that our patient's health care information continues to be safe and secure.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at: 715-588-3371.