

PRESS RELEASE

Department of Public Health Reports Data Breach Involving Patient Information at Tewksbury Hospital

Current and former patients are being notified

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Department of Public Health

MEDIA CONTACT

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BOSTON — State health officials responding to a former patient's complaint have determined that one employee of Tewksbury Hospital, one of four hospitals operated by the Department of Public Health, may have inappropriately accessed multiple patient medical records from 2003 to 2017.

Based on the hospital's review, individuals possibly affected by the breach include at least 1,100 people who were patients at Tewksbury Hospital during that time period.

The clerk responsible for this incident is no longer employed by Tewksbury Hospital and no longer has access to hospital patient medical records of any kind.

The information that was inappropriately viewed included names, addresses, phone numbers, dates of birth, gender, diagnoses, or other information about medical treatment at Tewksbury Hospital. For some patients, this may have also included social security numbers. Currently, there is no indication that any patient information has been misused as a result.

Tewksbury Hospital is providing a written notice to affected patients for whom the hospital has current contact information, and is [posting a notification on its website \(/news/data-breach-at-tewksbury-hospital\)](/news/data-breach-at-tewksbury-hospital). The Hospital has also made all required notifications to state and federal agencies, including the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, the Massachusetts Office for Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights.

In addition, Tewksbury Hospital has made immediate changes to further protect social security numbers and is examining its policies regarding access to its medical records system. It is undertaking a quality improvement review of auditing protocols for access to medical records, and strengthening the required training on the privacy and security of confidential information that all hospital employees must receive.

Individuals with questions or concerns about this matter are encouraged to [visit the Tewksbury Hospital website for more information \(/locations/tewksbury-hospital\)](/locations/tewksbury-hospital), or to call Tewksbury Hospital at one of two toll-free numbers:

Patients treated in hospital Medical Units

(888) 850-7541

Monday through Friday, 9 AM -5 PM

Patients treated in hospital Mental Health Units

(888) 850-7571

Monday through Friday, 9 AM -5 PM

About Tewksbury Hospital

Tewksbury Hospital operates a 370-bed Joint Commission accredited hospital. Approximately 220 complex chronic medical adult patients reside on seven inpatient units and 150 psychiatric clients reside on five inpatient units. A full range of ancillary services is available at the site, including 24/7 nursing, medicine, and psychiatry as well as clinical laboratory, psychology, radiology, respiratory care, speech pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, clinical dieticians, clinical social workers and pharmacy, and on-site dialysis clinic.

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