

Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat Notifies Patients of Data Security Incident

Little River Healthcare – Central Texas, LLC d/b/a Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat (Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat) has become aware of a data security incident that may have involved the personal and protected health information of its patients. We have sent notification to the potentially involved patients to notify them of this incident and to provide resources to assist them.

On July 7, 2017, Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat separated from Waco Otolaryngology Associates, P.A. (the “Practice”). Consequently, the Practice is now operating the clinic as an independent medical practice separate from Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat.

On June 26, 2017, it was discovered that Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat was the victim of a ransomware attack that encrypted the data stored on some computers and servers. Action was immediately taken to secure the network, and an investigation was conducted. An independent computer forensic expert was retained to assist in the investigation and the expert confirmed the presence of ransomware. Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat attempted to restore the infected data, and in the process of doing so discovered that some patient records were unfortunately irretrievably deleted. However, there is no evidence of the misuse of any information potentially involved in this incident.

Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat takes the security of all patient information very seriously and is taking steps to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future, including strengthening security measures and ensuring networks and systems are secure.

Notification letters have been sent out which include information about the incident and steps potentially impacted individuals can take to monitor and protect their personal information. Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat has established a toll-free call center to answer questions about the incident and related concerns. The call center is available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Central Time and can be reached at 1-877-919-6852. In addition, out of an abundance of caution, Little River Waco Ear Nose and Throat is offering identity protection services through ID Experts to potentially impacted individuals at no cost.

The privacy and protection of patient information is a top priority, and we deeply regret any inconvenience or concern this incident may cause.

The following information is provided to help patients or others wanting more information on steps they can take to protect themselves:

What steps can I take to protect my personal information?

- If you detect any suspicious activity on any of your accounts, you should promptly notify the financial institution or company with which the account is maintained. You should also promptly report any fraudulent activity or any suspected incidents of identity theft to proper law enforcement authorities.
- Obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, directly from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies. To order your credit report, free of charge once every 12 months, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call toll free at 1-877-322-8228.

Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting agencies is listed at the bottom of this page.

- Please notify your financial institution immediately of any unauthorized transactions made or new accounts opened in your name.
- You can take steps recommended by the Federal Trade Commission to protect yourself from identify theft. The FTC's website offers helpful information at www.ftc.gov/idtheft.
- Additional information on what you can do to better protect yourself is included in your letter.

What should I do to protect myself from payment card/credit card fraud?

We suggest you review your debit and credit card statements carefully for any unusual activity. If you see anything you do not understand or that looks suspicious, you should contact the issuer of the debit or credit card immediately.

How do I obtain a copy of my credit report?

You can obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, directly from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies. To order your credit report, free of charge once every 12 months, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call toll free at 1-877-322-8228. Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting agencies is included in the e-mail and letter, and is also listed at the bottom of this page:

How do I put a fraud alert on my account?

You may consider placing a fraud alert on your credit report. This fraud alert statement informs creditors to possible fraudulent activity within your report and requests that your creditor contact you prior to establishing any accounts in your name. To place a fraud alert on your credit report, contact Equifax, Experian or TransUnion and follow the Fraud Victims instructions. To place a fraud alert on your credit accounts, contact your financial institution or credit provider. Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting agencies is included in the letter and is also listed at the bottom of this page.

Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting agencies is as follows:

Equifax Security Freeze
PO Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
1-800-685-1111
www.equifax.com

Experian Security Freeze
PO Box 9554
Allen, TX 75013
1-888-397-3742
www.experian.com

TransUnion (FVAD)
PO Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022
1-800-888-4213
www.transunion.com