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With recent news reports about medical records being hacked in a number of hospitals across the state and nation, one cannot help but be concerned about the safety and security of their health records.

At Hopkins County Memorial Hospital, CEO Michael McAndrew said medical records and information data is secure and the hospital's records technology department is constantly on the alert.

"We've never experienced anything like that," McAndrew said. "Everybody, every business is subject to cyber attacks. We know that and we certainly see it every day."

The hospital administrator also said he felt the numbers of records maintained by the hospital in no way compares to that held by large hospital corporations such as Community Health Systems, whose data was breeched.

"Somebody would be less likely to come after our organization because we don't have 4.5 million pieces of patient information — to go through all the trouble to find out information on us is not likely," he said.

Part of the routine precaution at Hopkins County Memorial involved keeping all employees educated about these kinds of threats.

"We do take proper procedures, we educate our employees about how to be careful because they do get on the Internet, they do open emails," McAndrew said. "So, we do everything we can to educate them along those lines."

Although the hospital feels relatively comfortable with the level of computer network security currently in place, McAndrew said he is planning steps to make that security more secure in the coming year.

"We've also put in the budget for this coming year, starting Oct. 1, an even more advanced cyber security system than we have," McAndrew said. "I would never tell anybody it could never happen here because I don't think that's realistic. It's less likely to happen here than it is in a lot of other places and we are certainly being prudent in taking the appropriate precautions to make sure it does not happen."