From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

STATEMENT ON AUG. 21 DATA BREACH

Media contact: Jack Mazurak at (601) 984-1970 or jmazurak@umc.edu. Photos can be found here.

JACKSON, Miss. – An email with an incorrect attachment that included the personal data of 2,281 University of Mississippi Medical Center students was sent to 190 students at 5:33 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 21 via their student accounts.

A total of 115 students opened the e-mail, and an undetermined number opened the attachment. The UMMC Department of Information Services was alerted and retracted the emails, an action that started within 50 minutes.

The attachment, a spreadsheet, contained personal information of 2,281 Medical Center students enrolled as of Aug. 21. The personal information of Medical Center residents and fellows was not included. The spreadsheet included names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, ethnic origin, addresses, insurance information, UMMC school, GPA, credit hours earned, tuition and account balances.

UMMC administrators sincerely apologize for the mistake. The incident is under review and the 115 students who opened the e-mail received a follow-up message Thursday afternoon. All 2,281 people potentially affected will receive an e-mail today, followed by a hard-copy letter, detailing the options open to them through UMMC to further protect their personal information.

The original purpose of the email was to inform the 190 students of the health-care facilities that accept their student health insurance plan.

"The University of Mississippi Medical Center takes privacy and security very seriously and has established policies and procedures to help facilitate compliance with all privacy and security rules. Our institution regrets this incident and will take every action necessary to ensure it does not happen again," said Carol Denton, UMMC chief integrity and compliance officer.

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Please forward this message to colleagues who might be interested. If you wish to be removed from this list or know of a colleague to add, send an e-mail message to: jmazurak@umc.edu.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's health-care enterprise includes five hospitals and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's population. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at (601) 984-1100 or umc.edu/publicaffairs