

# Appendix D: Summit Opening Remarks

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## Opening Remarks

### Canadian Summit on Healthcare Cyber Security

#### Paul-Émile Cloutier

On behalf of HealthCareCAN, I want to welcome you to the Canadian summit on Healthcare Cyber Security.

I particularly want to acknowledge our friends at Public Safety Canada, whose generous support has made this Summit possible.

Today's event hinges on a growing recognition of the role that a secure digital infrastructure plays in ensuring a safe and dynamic health sector. Healthcare systems cannot deliver effective and safe care without embracing deeper digital connectivity.

Yet this new connectivity brings with it new risks to personal and system security. Healthcare's embrace of the digital age is a double edged sword. On a daily basis, we are asking our patients to choose between connectivity and security. Indeed, so much of the time we deny patients even the right to make that choice. This is wrong; we need to do more to undo this false choice we have thrust upon our patients.

Recent events, both at home and abroad, have taught healthcare leaders the paramount importance of Cyber Security to the system's continued vitality.

Discussions along these lines often begin and end with the 'WannaCry' ransomware attack last year. But if you look deeply enough, the examples are everywhere.

The Olympic Games were disrupted during a cyberattack just two weeks ago. We might consider ourselves lucky that Canada's healthcare organizations are not such an appealing target for criminals.

I know each of you here today stands ready to do your part to ensure our health system remains resilient in the face of Cyber Security risks. Yet there are fears the healthcare system as a whole is not rising to the challenge posed by Cyber threats today's brave new digital world.

According to a recent survey of healthcare leaders, 85% of leaders are concerned that their organization is vulnerable to Cyber attacks, with one in five believing that their systems were very vulnerable.

A similar proportion of the Canadian public feels the same.

Lapses in Cyber Security can critically impair the delivery of healthcare in the 21st century. The consequences of lax Cyber Security can be felt at many levels.

Taking a narrow view of the problem, hackers can exploit vulnerabilities to gain unauthorized access to payroll systems and electronic medical records. Consequences at this level could include: larceny, identity theft, ransom, or lawsuits against a hospital for failing to protect records.

But taking a broader view, a truly malicious actor could bring a hospital or healthcare system to its knees.

A motivated hacker can deny access to critical systems or disable key hospital equipment and applications. At this level, the consequences are very dire indeed.

Put simply, lax Cyber Security endangers patient safety, and risks undermining the faith patients place in the system as a whole. As a community, we need to address the challenges our industry faces in cybersecurity. We need to promote cyber resilience across the system.

HealthCareCAN is issuing a call to action to address Cyber security vulnerabilities in Canadian healthcare. We are inviting you to join us in charting a path forward.

Today's Summit has three objectives.

The first is to educate participants on the threat faced by modern healthcare systems and to convince you all, if you are not convinced already, of the severity of the challenge before us.

The second is to together launch a Declaration of Commitment to Cybersafe Healthcare. This document that proclaims a common understanding of the importance of Cyber Security in Canada's health sector and a commitment in principle to advancing the sector's resilience.

The third is to review and flesh-out potential options to jointly promote sector resilience and to identify additional options that have not previously surfaced.

You have all been invited to today's Summit in order to help us achieve these goals. I encourage you to engage deeply during today's sessions and to network generously during the breaks.

This Summit includes participation from leaders in a wide variety of different disciplines, including: healthcare executives, clinical leaders, experts in the relevant domains of law, insurance and academia, government partners, and technical experts from the world of Cyber security.

We are also privileged today to have representation from international players in healthcare Cyber security, who will be participating in a panel discussion on developments in healthcare Cyber security abroad. I have every confidence that their combined knowledge and expertise will add new depth to our understanding of the challenges that face us.

I encourage you to make every use of your peers' knowledge, influence, and expertise in the course of today's discussions.

I am confident that you will emerge from the Summit with a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the issues at play in healthcare Cyber Security.

At the end of the day and in the months to follow, I hope you will join us in our commitment to chart a new path towards Cybersafe healthcare in Canada.