Report on Patient Privacy Volume 19, Number 11. November 07, 2019 Addressing 'Deep Fake' Scans Is Critical Amid Tech Advances

By Jane Anderson

"Deep fake" radiology scans - with altered results falsely showing either fake cancerous nodes or a clear scan where the patient actually has cancer - are poised to spread, Israeli researchers warn, and health care entities need to take steps to guard against attacks, along with teaching providers to recognize signs that a scan has been altered.

Rogue states or terrorist groups could use these attacks to instill fear or attempt to alter political dynamics in other countries, but they also could be used in a more pedestrian way: for insurance fraud, researchers say in a study posted online at Cornell University's publications website.

Author Yisroel Mirsky tells *RPP* that malicious tampering of radiology scans is both an immediate threat and one that will escalate over time. "This attack may be rather immediate if a state actor is involved. However, the tampering of medical images, in my opinion, will likely become a more evident issue in the next two-to-four years as the technology becomes more accessible."

Insurance fraud would be possible if the potential attacker receives a copy of his or her own scan, Mirsky says, noting that this type of threat could grow more prevalent, largely "because the attack is much simpler - there is no need to develop a malware or infect the hospital's network."

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