

**Name:** Hailey Caram

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# Attacks on Availability

*Attacks on availability aim to purposely render a system inaccessible to users. The attack on Change Healthcare is a recent example designed to disrupt crucial services. Such attacks can be devastating to organizations, often impacting operations, revenue, and reputation and leaving users without trust or access.*

## Defining Attacks on Availability

An attack on availability can be defined as any type of action that results in a disruption of service for legitimate users or an inability to access services. Attacks on availability aim to hinder access and operations, which can result in significant damage or loss. Availability attacks are different from other attacks which aim to steal or modify data.

## Recent Example

The ransomware attack against Change Healthcare is a recent example of an attack on availability. A remote access vulnerability was exploited, allowing a ransomware group to halt pharmacy and billing services nationwide (American Hospital Association, 2025). The disruption to services lasted for weeks and resulted in major implications for both the organization and its customers.

## Broader Implications

Attacks such as ransomware or distributed denial of service (DDoS) affect organizational function, leading to operational disruption, financial loss, and reputational damage (National Cyber Security Centre, 2016). For users, attacks on availability can create emotional and financial stress, decreased organizational trust, and system inaccessibility.

## Conclusion

An attack on availability prevents users from accessing services and disrupts operations. Recently, Change Healthcare was attacked, and users were unable to access pharmacy or billing services across the nation for several weeks. This recent example highlights the negative impacts of attacks on availability for both organization and user, such as financial loss and decreased organizational reputation or trust.

## References

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- National Cyber Security Centre. (2016, March 15). *Denial of Service (DoS) guidance* - NCSC.GOV.UK. National Cyber Security Centre. Retrieved June 20, 2025, from <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/denial-service-dos-guidance-collection>