

Case Study

Gaston County, NC

A Cyber-First Approach to HIPAA Compliance and Data Protection

About Gaston County

Gaston County, North Carolina serves a population of over 210,000 residents through a range of public health and human services programs. Chris Dobbins, Director of the Gaston County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), oversees both the Health and Social Services divisions—together supporting more than 600 employees across the county.

When electronic health record (EHR) adoption accelerated under federal Meaningful Use incentives, Gaston County recognized the urgent need to strengthen its risk posture. To proactively address compliance and protect electronic protected health information (ePHI), the county partnered with Logically for its first HIPAA Security Risk Assessment (SRA).

Why It Matters

Public-sector health organizations manage some of the most sensitive data in government. With HIPAA requirements intensifying and cyber threats evolving rapidly, counties like Gaston must ensure not only compliance—but confidence in their ability to protect client data and maintain operations under pressure.

For Gaston County, a cyber-first mindset was essential to protect patient trust, reduce liability, and ensure resilience across all systems and departments.

The Challenge

As EHR systems became more widespread, public health agencies across the U.S. saw a sharp rise in breaches tied to misconfigurations, poor security hygiene, and insider error. Gaston County had historically strong internal controls, but recognized the need for an external, expert-led assessment to surface blind spots and benchmark security maturity.



We knew we were doing better than most—but with so many national HIPAA breaches, we wanted independent validation and a roadmap for improvement.

Chris Dobbins,
Director of DHHS, Gaston County

The Solution

Logically conducted a comprehensive HIPAA Security Risk Assessment (SRA) grounded in its cyber-first, compliance-forward methodology. The engagement included:



Security gap analysis across physical, administrative, and technical safeguards



Cross-functional education and culture shift across IT and health services staff



Policy and process review aligned to the HIPAA Security Rule



Contingency planning to ensure continuity in emergency mode operations



Risk mitigation roadmap tailored to Gaston County's hybrid environment

In addition to assessing the Health Department, Logically was later asked to extend the same rigor to the Social Services Division, reinforcing data security across all of DHHS.



Strategic Impact

- ✔ Strengthened HIPAA compliance posture
- ✔ Developed comprehensive training strategy and security awareness campaign
- ✔ Reviewed and revised county-wide policies to align with latest regulatory standards
- ✔ Elevated collaboration between IT and public health teams
- ✔ Instilled a security-first culture that emphasizes prevention, readiness, and shared accountability



This wasn't just a checklist. Logically worked side-by-side with our teams, translating IT risk into operational terms. They changed the culture around ePHI protection and made it stick.

Chris Dobbins,
Director of DHHS

Future Ready

Gaston County now treats HIPAA compliance as a foundation—not a finish line. Logically continues to provide hands-on, cyber-first advisory, helping the county evolve security protocols, validate disaster recovery strategies, and plan future training and tabletop exercises.



Cybersecurity is never one and done. Logically continues to guide us, ensuring we're current on threats, tools, and rules. They're a true strategic partner.

Chris Dobbins,
Director of DHHS



Partnering for Resilient, Future-Ready Public Health and Human Services

In public health and human services, secure, reliable systems are vital for protecting sensitive information and ensuring uninterrupted delivery of critical programs. With Logically's expertise, agencies can strengthen data security, improve operational efficiency, and meet evolving compliance requirements—empowering them to serve communities with confidence. Let's explore how we can help you build secure, efficient, and future-ready public health and human services operations.

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