Healthcare Facilities: Maintaining Accessibility While Implementing Security

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Introduction

- There were 494 terrorist attacks against hospitals from 1979 to 2018. Of those, 78 targeted specific individuals within hospitals (Alfalasi et. al 2022).
- The June 2022 shooting at Saint Francis Hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma demonstrated the vulnerability of healthcare settings. The shooter entered the hospital through unlocked doors.

Research Questions

This project examines two key questions:

1. What are the top threat areas to hospitals and/or healthcare facilities?
2. What are the key vulnerabilities of healthcare facilities?

Background on Healthcare Threats

A review of academic literature, news, and government resources revealed three main threat areas (scan the QR code for more details):

Cybersecurity

- Ransomware attacks
- Terrorist organizations' propaganda in COVID-19 pandemic

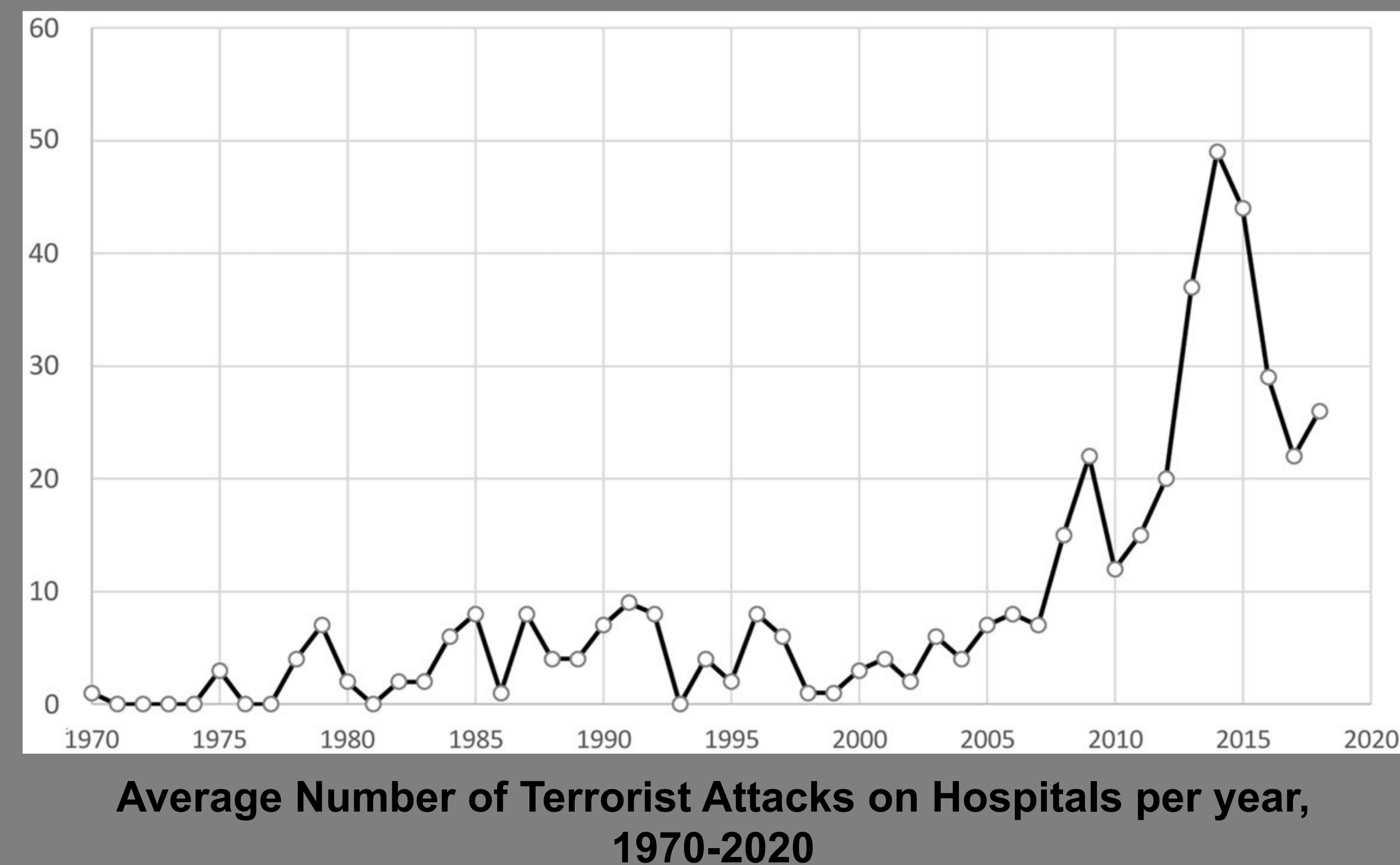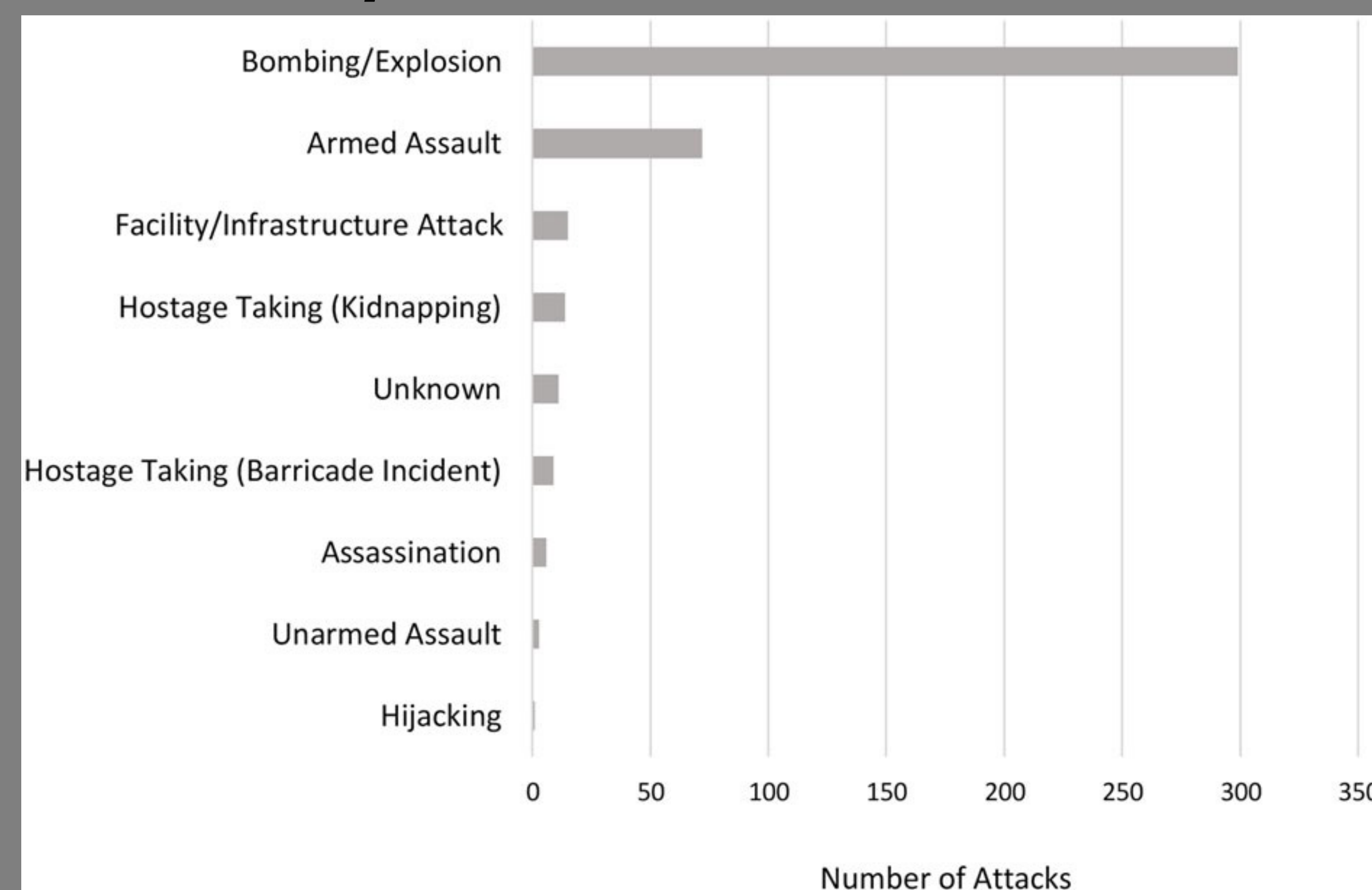### Physical Infrastructure

- Healthcare workers
- Malevolent usage of vehicles and drones

Physical and Mental Health Environment

- Political conspiracy theory development
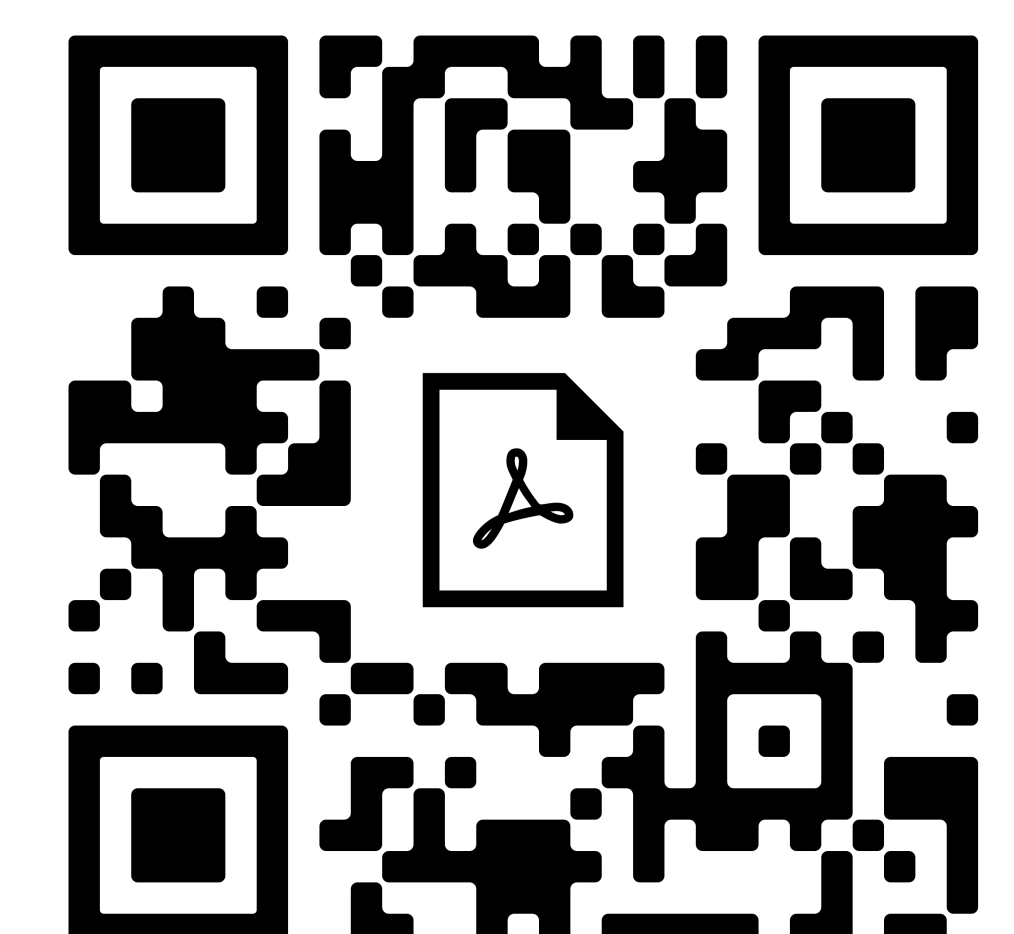- Medical personnel death and illness

Between 2010 and 2018, there was an average of 28.2 terrorist attacks per year against hospitals worldwide.*

Number of Attacks

Average Number of Terrorist Attacks on Hospitals per year, 1970-2020

*Sentence and data graphs from "The Rising Threat of Terrorist Attacks Against Hospitals", Alfalasi et. al, 2022. doi: 10.1017/S1049023X22000413.

Assessing the Vulnerability of Healthcare Facilities

- A project is coming in 2023 which will seek to answer how to maintain accessibility in healthcare facilities while implementing security.
- The project will assess vulnerabilities exposed in terrorist attacks.
- Vulnerability assessments will be conducted on 10 attacks on hospitals found in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from the years 2010-2020.
- An assessment tool will check various facilities' communications abilities, security response measures, and the facilities' critical products and/or services.