

Fraud Awareness Newsletter

Local Counter
Fraud Specialists
(LCFS)

2017/18 Q4

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of the Fraud Awareness Newsletter.

We will provide an update on the latest NHS fraud cases, focusing on fraud when there were control weaknesses in the finance department.

While the majority of people who work in or use the NHS are honest, fraud does exist and is a serious issue. Fraud in the NHS, on any scale, diverts resources from patient care, salaries and services. Your LCFS team aims to make people aware that fraud is being tackled.

Doctor jailed for four years for NHS fraud

In the news...

A doctor thought to have carried out the largest one-man fraud on the NHS, was jailed for four years.

Dimitri Padelis, 45, may have gained up to £4 million by systematically sending health trusts thousands of bogus invoices from a string of firms that specialised in supplying hospital locum stand-ins.

He relied on the fact that many hospital accounts departments were understaffed, overworked and, often, too inefficient to realise they were being defrauded, London's Southwark Crown Court was told.

Even children's hospitals were not safe from him. Amongst the hardest hit was

London's Great Ormond Street. It was targeted 90 times, and lost more than £12,000 from the budget used to treat patients and cut waiting times.

Passing sentence Judge Jeffrey Rucker told the disgraced doctor that, "there was such a strong element of systematic conduct and although it may have been difficult to spot, once you had spotted it, it was there and very clear to see. You, seeing the weakness in the accounting procedures of the trusts, chose to defraud that system out of greed for yourself and your family."

"A further matter, at least as serious, is that you are an educated man. You are a doctor who plundered the system that first of all gave you employment as a doctor and then as a businessman running your agencies."

The judge also ordered him to pay £100,000 prosecution costs and banned him from being a company director for five years. He now faces being struck off the Medical Register.

March 2018

Source:

www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-49119/Doctor-jailed-years-NHS-fraud.html



Accountant jailed for car lease fraud

A health trust accountant has been jailed for defrauding the NHS out of more than £84,000.

John Thurlbeck, 59, was sentenced to two years in prison and must serve 12 months. Durham Crown Court heard he had fraudulently assigned himself fuel and cars over a period of ten years.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust said Thurlbeck had "detailed knowledge of the systems in place, which he abused and manipulated. We have introduced additional segregation of duties and checks have also been

introduced for any lease car agreement".

Thurlbeck had abused an NHS staff car leasing scheme which he was responsible for as finance officer. Over the years he and his wife used 16 cars but did not deduct from his salary the £65,000 they would have cost to lease. He also used cards assigned to the cars to purchase just over £19,000 in fuel.

The defence said he had previously been of good character and his wife knew nothing of the fraud. He was dismissed for gross misconduct in May 2017 and,

when interviewed by police, admitted the offences.

Judge James Spencer told him he had been "living a lie" for the past 10 years. "You enriched your own life by defrauding the car scheme for two family cars, all the while you were going about your apparently respectable life".

March 2018

Source:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tees-43348463>

Staying vigilant – or turning a blind eye?

PwC's 2018 Global Economic Crime and Fraud Survey finds that 49% of global organisations say they've experienced economic crime in the past two years. But what about the other 51%? Have they avoided falling victim – or simply don't know about it? Since fraud hides in the shadows, one of the most powerful weapons in a fraudster's armoury is a lack of awareness within organisations.

Fraud is a deception deliberately practiced in order to secure unfair or unlawful gain, and the NHS is as vulnerable as anywhere. Tough economic times are a proven breeding ground for fraud. Fraud has increased since the economic crisis of 2008. Efforts to prevent fraud are becoming ever more important, particularly in an environment where the NHS faces some of the biggest financial challenges in its history.

Some people say fraud is a victimless crime but it's not: we all pay tax. Fraud is money that's lost to salaries and patient care. Fraud can take many forms, such as dishonest expenses or timesheet claims, duplicate invoicing or working elsewhere when off sick.

Organisations can put controls in place that can prevent fraud and there are all sorts of things that can be done such as training, raising awareness and making sure there are adequate policies and procedures.

It is clearly preferable to prevent fraud happening in the first place, but once suspicions are raised, please report them. By keeping alert, we can all help to make sure fraud doesn't happen in the NHS.

You should be alert and aware if any supplier or colleague has done or is asking you to do something you feel uncomfortable about. Don't be duped or tricked into doing things because of time pressures, for instance.

By being alert you will be ensuring more public money is available for delivering care, rather than going to dishonest individuals. Which is good for the NHS, the patients and the staff too.

If you have any suspicions or concerns about fraud in the NHS, you can contact your LCFS, call our anonymous, 24-hour reporting line on 0800 028 4060 or you can report online, completely confidentially, at www.cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud

Remember, who pays for fraud? We all do...

Meet your counter fraud team

Contact your local counter fraud specialist team in absolute



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"We're here to talk about any concerns you may have about fraud and corruption, or just happy to discuss why fraud is a big issue for the NHS. Never be afraid to give us a call"



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**Fraud in Your
NHS Workplace?**
Report it!



If you have any suspicions or concerns,
you can call us anonymously on
0800 028 40 60

POWERED BY CRIMESTOPPERS

or search 'NHS Fraud' online for more information.
The NHS Counter Fraud Authority leads on fighting fraud, bribery
and corruption in the NHS and the wider health group


Counter Fraud Authority


Department
of Health