

Fraud Awareness Newsletter

Local Counter Fraud Specialists (LCFS) | 2018/19 Q2

Welcome to this edition of the Fraud Awareness Newsletter.

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 effectively. In this newsletter we highlight some of the recent prosecutions of those who attempted to defraud the NHS



Medical recruitment agent masterminded multiple NHS fraud conspiracies

A medical recruitment agent, four health care assistants and a nurse, have all been sentenced for conspiracy to defraud. The agent had persuaded the others to defraud the NHS.

Charles Elad was working as a recruitment officer for ID Medical at the time of the offences. The total loss to the NHS was £72,991 with a number of hospitals targeted.

Elad enlisted the five HCAs and nurse to submit fraudulent timesheets to the recruitment agency. The agency, unaware that fraudulent activity was taking place, then unknowingly invoiced the various Trusts for these shifts.

Once an agency worker had been paid for these "ghost shifts" Elad would request they make a payment to him, using his wife's bank account to hide the transactions

Source: NHSCFA, May 2018

Four in NHS conspiracy group sentenced to a total of nearly 13 years

A former NHS Associate Director and his three co-conspirators were sentenced earlier this year for conspiracy to defraud. Royston Dyke was employed by Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as the Associate Director of Capital and Development. One of his responsibilities was to approve contractor invoices.

The investigation revealed that in more than 200 invoices were submitted, typically valued between £3,000 and £5,000. The majority of these invoices were for work that had never taken place. Suspicions were raised through the Trust's internal processes, due to Dyke's particular interest in signing off these invoices.

The Trust was defrauded to the value of £655,013. Much of this was used to pay for Dyke's lavish lifestyle, including renovating his home.

Through the investigation, it also came to light that Dyke had a previous criminal conviction, and a police caution which he had failed to mention to the Trust.

Richard Rippin, Head of Operations at the NHSCFA, said: *"Money intended for patient care should stay where it belongs, in the public purse. The result demonstrates that NHS fraud will not be tolerated, fraudsters will be brought to justice, and wherever possible, redress of the money stolen will be sought."*

Source: NHSCFA, August 2018

National Fraud Initiative

In excess of £1.3bn in fraudulent or mistaken payments have been prevented through the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) over the years.

What is NFI? The NFI is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between 1,300 public and private sector bodies, including NHS organisations, councils, the police, housing and private companies. This helps to identify potentially fraudulent claims, errors and overpayments.

How can the NFI help? The NFI exercise can help NHS organisations identify a range of issues. Examples include individuals with no right to work in the UK, employees committing benefit fraud or working elsewhere, duplicate payments to suppliers and creditors or employees who have controlling interests in companies that NHS organisations are trading with.

Case Study – Immigration

A payroll immigration match revealed that an NHS employee had used false documents to obtain employment as a health care assistant. Investigations revealed that the employee had falsely claimed on his application form that he had the right to work in the UK. He had also submitted a fraudulent letter, supposedly sent to him by the Home Office, stating there were no restrictions on his right to work in the UK.

Case Study – Payroll

An NFI match that compared housing benefit records to NHS payroll identified an NHS employee who had been given a suspended prison sentence after fraudulently claimed more than £7,000 of benefits.

The investigation revealed that she had been working as a full-time senior staff nurse while claiming and receiving housing and council tax benefit. Her salary had been paid into a bank account which she had not revealed to the council.

Source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-fraud-initiative

Need to know...

Need to know...

Meet your counter fraud team

Contact your local counter fraud specialist team in absolute confidence



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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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Health Service Fraud
Eating into valuable resources



If you have any suspicions or concerns, you can call us anonymously on

0800 028 40 60

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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.

NHS

Counter Fraud Authority

Department of Health & Social Care