

# Fraud Awareness Newsletter

Local Counter  
Fraud Specialists  
(LCFS)

2017/18 Q2

## Welcome

Welcome to this edition of the Fraud Awareness Newsletter.

We will provide an update on the latest NHS fraud cases, focusing on a case where a student faked her identity and a case where there was large scale mandate fraud investigation. There are also details on the National Fraud Initiative exercise which matches electronic data within and between 1,300 public and private sector bodies.

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.

### Student defrauded £88,000 from NHS with false ID and invented children

#### *In the news...*

Eleanor Bonde (57), faked her identity and invented dependent children to obtain three university nursing places, and NHS bursaries. The total loss to the NHS was £88,804 – enough to pay four newly qualified nurses' annual salaries.

She committed the frauds between



2001 and 2007 and failed all three courses part way through them, so never became a nurse. NHS Protect is the name of the body responsible for overseeing and coordinating the efforts to prevent, detect and investigate fraud against the NHS. Their investigation established that Bonde made three nursing course applications, to three different universities. It found that false identity documents were presented for enrolment at two of the universities.

Between April 2004 and February 2007, Bonde obtained £21,858 in course fees and bursary payments from the NHS, by deception.

Bonde pleaded guilty to three counts

of fraud after an investigation by NHS Protect, and has been sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment, suspended for two years.

NHS Protect will now seek to recover the defrauded money for the NHS, so it can be properly used for patient care and staff education.

Sue Frith, Managing Director of NHS Protect, said: *"In this case, a lot of public money has gone to waste to train and support someone who was well aware she was not eligible for the courses, the course funding or the bursaries. The NHS can ill afford to be exploited in this way for personal gain."* **July 2017**

### NHS Protect helps solve £12m divert fraud

Since the end of 2011 Lincolnshire Police have been investigating a series of 'divert frauds', also known as 'mandate frauds', against public bodies including NHS Trusts. The fraud involves fraudsters using the names of genuine NHS suppliers and stating that those suppliers' bank account details have changed. Over £12 million was subsequently laundered, much of it overseas. Numerous UK police forces and agencies in Dubai, Poland and other countries worked closely to crack the international organised crime group.

The NHS targets were; Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust lost

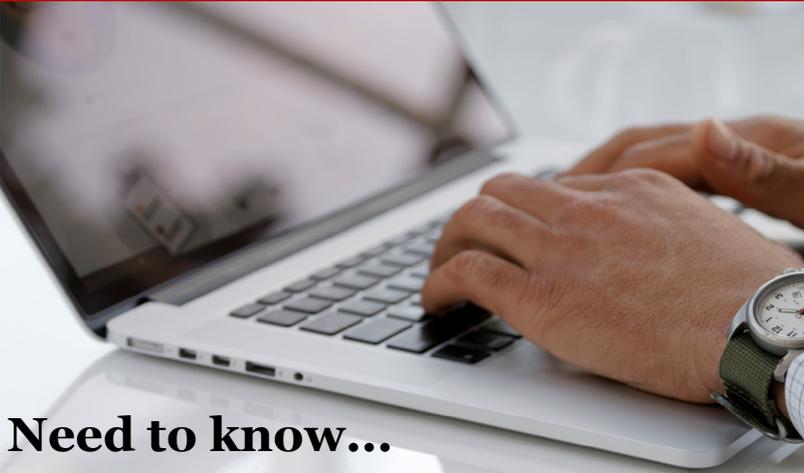
£1.28m, which was laundered through eight separate bank accounts; Royal Free Hampstead Hospital paid out £1.43m to the fraudsters, but the cash was returned; North Essex Partnership NHS FT was defrauded of £896,700, with £536,966 recovered; and Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS FT paid £261,260, all the money was lost.

Norfolk and Suffolk NHS FT, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS FT and Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS FT were targeted but did not respond and ignored the bogus email they received.

Lincolnshire Police have acknowledged the central role played by NHS Protect's Forensic Computing Unit in bringing an organised crime group to justice, ten of whom were sentenced in June 2017.

Sue Frith, Managing Director of NHS Protect, said: *"The collaborative work NHS Protect does with other agencies is vital in tackling fraud against the health service. We have been working together closely on this investigation."* **June 2017**

## National Fraud Initiative



### Need to know...

In excess of £1.3 billion in fraudulent or mistaken payments have been prevented through the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) services 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 almost 100 private companies. This helps to

identify potentially fraudulent claims, errors and overpayments.

#### **How can NFI help?**

The NFI exercise can help NHS organisations identify a range of issues, for example, individuals with no right to work in the UK, employees committing benefit fraud or working elsewhere, duplicate payments and creditors or employee interests in companies NHS organisations are trading with.

#### **Case Study - immigration**

A payroll to 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**

A NFI housing benefit to payroll match resulted in an NHS employee receiving a 6 month suspended sentence after it was discovered she had fraudulently claimed more than £7,000 of benefits.

The investigation of the match revealed 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-fraud-initiative)

## Meet your counter fraud team

*Contact your local counter fraud specialist team in absolute*



**Neil Mohan**

T: 01509 604 029

E: [neil.mohan@nhs.net](mailto:neil.mohan@nhs.net)

*“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”*



**Gina Dosanjh Lekh**

T: 01223 552333

E: [g.lekh@nhs.net](mailto:g.lekh@nhs.net)



**Juliette Meek**

T: 01603 883099

M: 07802 658845

E: [juliette.meek@nhs.net](mailto:juliette.meek@nhs.net)