Recent Fraud Cases

Fraudster used fake prescriptions to get £40,000 of drugs, jailed

Liam Brickley obtained oxycodone and diazepam from pharmacies across Bedfordshire over a two-year period, by using 92 false prescriptions in four different alias names.

The prescriptions were made out using the names of doctors from two different GP surgeries, who were confirmed to be no longer working with their former practices.

His fraudulent activities came to light in March 2022 when one of the pharmacists recognised him as someone she had served in a different pharmacy two days earlier. She raised it with her supervisor and checks were carried out which showed that the prescriptions were false.

Brickley was then identified via CCTV and was arrested and charged with fraud offences. Brickley pleaded guilty to several counts of the use of a false prescription for a scheduled drug, possession of an article for use in fraud and possession of Class A and Class C drugs at Luton Crown Court and was sentenced to a year and six months in prison.

Three years & eight months sentence for £560,000 NHS Fraud

A Senior Manager at NHS Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was sentenced to three years and eight months at Southwark Crown Court last month.

Thomas Elrick pleaded guilty to a charge of Fraud by Abuse of Position earlier this year. He stated that he knew what he was doing was dishonest and that he committed the fraud purely for financial gain.

The fraud came to light when a colleague at Harrow CCG, where Elrick had been employed between April 2017 and December 2020 as the Assistant Managing Director for Planned and Unscheduled Care, queried invoices from a company called Tree of Andre Therapy Services Limited.

Due to the unusual company name, checks were carried out. Searches could not find a company web site, there was no trace of the company being registered on the Care Quality Commission website and the company was shown as dormant on Companies House records.

Between August 2018 and December 2020, Elrick authorised and approved invoices submitted by Tree of Andre for payment to Harrow CCG totalling £564,484.80.

He was the sole approver for all invoices submitted, and no services were delivered, or work conducted for the CCG by that company.

In an attempt to cover up the fraud, Elrick had sent an email in purporting to be from Tree of Andre to NHS Harrow CCG providing anonymised patient details where care was shown to have been provided, as well as the GP practices concerned. The email was sent from the email address of Elrick's deceased wife.

In November 2021 Elrick was arrested. When interviewed by NHS CFA investigators he confirmed that Tree of Andre was a ghost company he had set up. He had registered the company on-line in the name of family members who had no knowledge of the fraud.

Elrick confirmed he had set this company up to facilitate the fraud and that no services were ever provided by it. He confirmed the payments made by Harrow CCG were made into his bank account.

Nurse convicted of fraud after earning almost £9k for shifts she didn't work

Sophia Kudzai Chifamba claimed almost £9,000 for agency shifts in Leeds hospitals that she didn't turn up to. She submitted at least 50 fraudulent timesheets between July 2018 and September 2019 while she was a trainee nurse.

A Nursing and Midwifery Council misconduct hearing last month was told that Chifamba was "drowning in debt" while at university. A report of the hearing explains that she had initially started her nursing training at the University of Leeds, before she was excluded in 2017 after being accused of academic malpractice - including plagiarism.

Chifamba did not appeal the decision, but instead signed on to a Masters course at the University of Huddersfield, which she completed in 2020. Initially, she was funding her studies through a NHS bursary, which she lost after her exclusion from the University of Leeds.

Chifamba took out an overdraft, four payday loans and borrowed from family and friends to fund her Masters degree.

Between July 2018 and September 2019, Chifamba pocketed £8,814.49 for agency shifts at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust that she did not turn up to. Following a police investigation, Chifamba admitted a charge of fraud at Leeds Magistrates Court and was later sentenced to 150 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay a £1,000 fine. She made a self-referral to the NMC.

The panel concluded that Chifamba's fitness to practise as a nurse was impaired, and that her course of conduct was "premeditated, systematic and over a prolonged period of time". While the panel accepted that she was experiencing difficult circumstances at the time she carried out the fraud, they found she had shown "limited remorse and insight".

Chifamba will be struck off from the nurses register, which will prevent her from working as a nurse, unless she appeals the decision within 28 days. In the event of the appeal process being activated, she will remain suspended for 18 months.

To report suspected fraud contact our Anti-Fraud Specialist

Darrell Davies
Regional Assurance Director (Anti-Fraud)
📞 07785 286381
✉ Darrell.Davies@miaa.nhs.uk

Paul Bell
Senior Anti-Fraud Manager
📞 07552 253068
✉ Paul.Bell@miaa.nhs.uk

Claire Smallman
Senior Anti-Fraud Manager
📞 07769 304145
✉ Claire.Smallman@miaa.nhs.uk

Sarah Bailey
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07721 488602
✉ Sarah.Bailey@miaa.nhs.uk

Alun Gordon
Local Counter-Fraud Specialist
📞 07469 573 678
✉ Alun.Gordon@miaa.nhs.uk

Kevin Howells
Anti-Fraud Manager
📞 078257 32629
✉ Kevin.Howells@miaa.nhs.uk

Phillip Leong
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07721 237352
✉ Phillip.Leong@miaa.nhs.uk

Virginia Martin
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07551 131109
✉ Virginia.Martin@miaa.nhs.uk

Karen McArdle
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07774 332881
✉ Karen.McArdle@miaa.nhs.uk

Paul McGrath
Anti-Fraud Manager
📞 07584774761
✉ Paul.McGrath@miaa.nhs.uk

Neil McQueen
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07721 237353
✉ Neil.McQueen@miaa.nhs.uk

Michelle Moss
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07825 858685
✉ Michelle.Moss@miaa.nhs.uk

Andrew Wade
Anti-Fraud Specialist
📞 07824 104 209
✉ Andrew.Wade@miaa.nhs.uk