



Recent Fraud Cases

MIAA Anti-Fraud Update

January 2023

Manchester Medical Secretary Found Guilty of Six Counts of NHS Fraud

A Medical Secretary who worked at Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust was found guilty of six counts of fraud against the NHS at Manchester Crown Court following an investigation by MIAA.

Victoria Johnstone was found guilty of amending her annual leave records by deleting leave she had already taken and of claiming overtime for typing she did in her normal substantive NHS hours. She was sentenced to a six-month custodial sentence suspended for 12 months, 80 hours unpaid work and has to repay the fraud overpayment amount of £4,160.03.

Kevin Howells, MIAA's Counter Fraud Specialist, who investigated the case said:

"We estimate that the NHS is vulnerable to £1.198 billion worth of fraud each year. Each fraud takes funds away from vital front-line services and means fewer doctors and nurses. Our role is to protect the service from theft and fraud. This is more important than ever at this current time of increased financial pressure."

£5k NHS compensation fraud lands claimant with 7 month custodial sentence

A claimant has been found guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to 7 months imprisonment, having fabricated a minor accident at an NHS Trust. NHS Resolution challenged the employer's liability claim, on behalf of Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust, and brought committal proceedings.

Mr Rhys Williams sought damages of £5,000, together with physiotherapy charges of £510, for injuries arising from an alleged accident on 22 November 2019 which he said occurred while working for the Trust as a security guard.

Following a committal application heard on 1 November 2021 at the Royal Courts of Justice, the court found that Mr Williams had fabricated the accident with the intention of making a claim for compensation. Mr Williams was sentenced to 7 months imprisonment.

In commenting on the case the Judge said: "I would be failing in my duty to the public by not imposing an immediate custodial sentence", noting

that "In this case the defendant has brought an entirely false claim, rather than simply exaggerating his injury. At every step his conduct was intentional and this is extremely serious" and "...the modesty of the claim does not remove the seriousness of the contempt".

This was a blatant attempt to defraud the NHS. Genuine claimants have nothing to fear; however, where there is evidence of a fabricated or exaggerated claim we will continue to take steps to protect public funds and to pursue a custodial sentence.

Helen Vernon, Chief Executive, NHS Resolution has successfully pursued a number of actions for contempt of court in recent years resulting in jail sentences.