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### Welcome to the latest edition of *Fraudulent Times*.

This newsletter has been designed to highlight areas of fraud within the NHS and to help you understand why we need to combat it effectively. By raising awareness of fraud cases it will help you to identify what fraud is and where it is most likely to occur.

As always, I hope that you will find our newsletter a useful and interesting read. We value feedback on the content so if you have any comments or suggestions for topics in future editions please email these to us at the address at the bottom of the page.

**Craig Bevan-Davies**  
*Assistant Director*  
*Anti-Crime Services*  
**360 Assurance**

If you wish to report any concerns regarding fraud, bribery or corruption, please contact a member of our team (details can be found on the back page), ring email [counterfraud.360@nhs.net](mailto:counterfraud.360@nhs.net), or contact the NHS Counter Fraud Authority Reporting Line on 0800 028 4060.

 Follow @NHSCounterFraud

## FRAUD EPIDEMIC IS NOW A NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT

Fraud has reached epidemic levels in the UK and should be seen as a national security issue, states the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). The scale of credit card, identity and cyber-fraud makes it the UK's most prevalent crime, costing up to £190billion a year.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales found 3.7 million reported incidents in 2019-20 of members of the public being targeted by credit card, identity and cyber-fraud. One estimate from 2017 put the cost of fraud to businesses at £140billion. Furthermore, fraud against the public sector, including benefit, tax credit and student loan fraud, is estimated to cost £31-48billion a year, the upper figure larger than the UK's annual defence budget.

RUSI state that the losses to fraud go beyond the financial impact. They add "Fraud has the potential to disrupt society in multiple ways, by psychologically impacting individuals, undermining the viability of businesses, putting pressure on public services, fuelling organised crime and funding terrorism". (BBC, 2021)

### NHS WORKER STOLE DEAD PATIENT'S BANK CARD TO BUY SNACKS

A healthcare assistant on a COVID-19 ward, who police said stole a dead patient's bank card to buy crisps and sweets, has been given a suspended prison sentence.

Ayesha Basharat took the 83-year-old woman's card after she died on 24 January at Heartlands Hospital, Birmingham, West Midlands Police said.

She used the card 17 minutes after the time of death had been recorded, Birmingham Crown court was told.

Basharat, 23, previously admitted theft and fraud by false representation. She used the card to make six purchases of £1 each on the hospital's vending machine using the contactless pad, police said.

Basharat made a similar purchase later in the day and tried again twice when she returned to work on 28 January. But the force said the card had been cancelled by then and she was arrested during her shift with the card still in her possession.

Officers said she claimed to have found it and confused it with her own card, but they were different colours and she ignored hospital rules around patient lost property. She was given two concurrent jail terms of five months each, suspended for 18 months. (BBC, 2021)



### BEWARE OF TICKET FRAUD AS RESTRICTIONS EASE

Action Fraud are warning the public to take extra care when buying tickets for festivals and events online, as figures from the national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime reveal almost £1 million has been lost to ticket fraud so far this year.

Data from Action Fraud reveals that 1,085 reports of ticket fraud have been made so far this year, equating to an average loss of £850 per victim. Almost two thirds of victims, 61 per cent, were aged between 20 and 49 years old.

One victim lost £200 after posting on Twitter asking if anyone had tickets for sale for a concert. The victim was messaged by someone who claimed they had a number of tickets for sale and the suspect claimed they would transfer the tickets to the victim as soon as payment was received. The victim sent the payment via PayPal and once the suspect had received the payment, they blocked the victim. (Action Fraud, 2021)

#### Did you know?

HSBC have launched a fraud awareness app to provide businesses, as well as the general public, with up-to-the-minute news on emerging scams.

As well as sending users notifications on new scams and fraud tactics, the free app includes advice and tips on how to avoid falling victim to fraud and provides real-life stories from customers.

The app is named HSBC Fraud and Cyber Awareness and it is available to be downloaded by HSBC and non-HSBC customers.

**ACCOUNTANT GIVEN 11 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT FOR £1.3 MILLION FRAUD**

An accountant who defrauded the NHS, companies and individuals out of more than £1.3 million has been jailed recently, 15 April 2021, for multiple counts of fraud and theft.

Stephen Day, pictured right, has been imprisoned at Leeds Crown Court, to serve 11 years and five months for 10 counts of fraud and two counts of theft.

Day became a board member or trustee of eight companies, working to persuade them to use his business for their payroll services and financial management operations.

Once they agreed, he would use his authority to take hundreds of thousands of pounds out of their bank accounts under the guise of legitimate payments.

In 2012, Day began defrauding the NHS. He applied for jobs with three different Trusts, eventually working for all of them at the same time.

Day claimed tens of thousands of pounds from each Trust in Merseyside, Staffordshire and Cheshire.

He made excuses for his failure to attend work, including false claims of chemotherapy treatment for cancer, falling from a horse and shingles. During this time, he continued to work for private sector organisations that he was also defrauding.

At the same time, Day was also engaged in romance fraud by falsely claiming he wanted to be in a relationship with a female victim but instead he stole her money. He did this whilst in relationships with two men—neither of whom knew about the other or the victim of this dating fraud.

He used the money fraudulently taken from the companies and NHS to buy houses around the country, to fund foreign travel including a trip to Malta and to pay for the care of his elderly mother.

Ben Reid of the CPS, said: "Stephen Day was trusted by many to look after their money—but instead he took the money and splashed out on holidays and houses for himself. His actions amounted to an appalling breach of trust, using his job positions to steal from the NHS much needed funds and manipulating his personal relationships to facilitate fraud and theft, all for his own personal gain." (Crown Prosecution Service, 2021)

**FRAUD ALERT: SCAM TEXT REGARDING COVID-19 VACCINES**

360 Assurance have been made aware of patients receiving unsolicited text messages containing incorrect information regarding COVID vaccines. In this instance, the text messages states that the vaccination a patient has received is from a 'suspect batch' and to contact a given mobile number as soon as possible. If staff or patients receive such texts they should report their concerns to Action Fraud via 0300 123 2040 or via <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>.

**SIX-MONTH CUSTODIAL SENTENCE FOR MULTI-MILLION POUND ATTEMPTED FRAUD ON THE NHS**

At a committal hearing on 11 February 2021, Ms Linda Metcalf was sentenced to six months in jail for deliberately attempting to defraud the NHS of in excess of £5.7million. In addition to this, Ms Metcalf was ordered to repay the costs of the committal hearing within 28 days, amounting to £23,000.

NHS Resolution pursued committal proceedings on behalf of Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, in line with its strategy to combat and deter fraud by dishonest claimants. The court concluded that Ms Metcalf was fundamentally dishonest for grossly exaggerating the effect of injuries sustained from a delay in diagnosing spinal cord compression and that she deliberately and fraudulently claimed compensation in excess of £5.7 million against the NHS. Ms Metcalf has re-paid the interim payment of £75,000 that she received for her injuries.

Video surveillance of Ms Metcalf showed that, while she claimed to be severely disabled, she only used her wheelchair and crutches for medical appointments.

In his remarks, The Honourable Mr Justice Griffiths said: "She gave a completely stage managed appearance about her disability. On July 23rd 2018, she was interviewed at her parents' house when she said that she could not get in or out of her car without someone to help her. She was misleading and that was shown on more than one occasion."

Jailing her, he stressed how the losses would have impacted on the NHS stating "It was not a one off, it was a course of conduct which was sustained relentlessly over a course of years." (NHS Resolution, 2021)

**#PROTECTYOURPENSION AS £1.8 MILLION LOST TO PENSION FRAUD SO FAR THIS YEAR**

Action Fraud is warning savers to remain vigilant and protect their pensions, as figures from the national reporting centre for fraud and cyber crime reveal £1.8 million has already been lost to pension fraud this year. There has been an increase in reporting so far this year, with 107 reports of pension fraud receiving in the first three months of 2021. This is an increase of almost 45 per cent when compared to the same period in 2020.

Action Fraud have launched a national awareness campaign (Tuesday 20 April 2021) to remind the public about the importance of doing your research before making changes to your pension arrangements.

(Action Fraud, 2021)

**Did you know?**

The UK Cabinet Office has released a new set of standards which your Counter Fraud Specialist will be working in accordance to, as of 1 April 2021. These standards are the Counter Fraud Functional Standard (GovS 013) which can be found [here](#).

From April 2021 all NHS organisations will be required to provide assurance against the Functional Standard. This should be overseen by the organisation's finance director and audit committee and in line with the organisation's existing approach to assurance against previous counter fraud requirements.

Every year the NHSCFA will be required to provide assurance to the Cabinet Office of how the NHS is identifying and mitigating the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption. Consequently, NHS funded services will be required to provide the NHSCFA with details of their performance against the Functional Standard annually.

**DOCTOR ADMITS FRAUD AFTER TAKING PCR COVID-19 TEST CERTIFICATE TO FLY ABROAD**

Sohyla Mohamed was boarding a flight from Heathrow to Egypt on April 2 when she was stopped by officials, suspicious about paperwork stating that she was virus-free.

Government rules stipulate that travellers must take a PCR test and have a document certifying they are not carrying Covid-19 before being allowed to fly.

Mohamed, who intended to fly with her two children, claims she had taken a lateral flow test and knew she was not carrying the virus, and asked a friend to produce a fake PCR certificate to get past airport controls.

She told Wimbledon magistrates court: "I wanted to be sure I was free from Covid, that was what was in my mind. I'm really sorry." Magistrate Susan Keisler imposed a six-week prison sentence, suspended for a year, and ordered Mohamed to carry out 60 hours of community service. (Evening Standard, 2021)

**SCAMS WARNING FOR TAX CREDITS CUSTOMERS**

Tax credits customers should be vigilant and alert to potential scams, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has warned, as the remaining annual renewal packs arrived in the post during June. In the 12 months to 30 April 2021, HMRC responded to more than 1,154,300 referrals of suspicious contact from the public. More than 576,960 of these offered bogus tax rebates. In the same period, HMRC has worked with telecoms companies and Ofcom to remove more than 3,000 malicious telephone numbers, and with internet service providers to take down over 15,700 malicious web pages. (Action Fraud, 2021)

**PHARMACIST JAILED FOR £76,000 PRESCRIPTION SCAM**

A pharmacist who cheated the NHS out of more than £76,000 in a prescription scam has been jailed for 16 months.

Michael Lloyd, pictured right, made fraudulent claims on 1,500 prescriptions from his Tablot Pharmacy at Talbot Green, Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Examples included billing the NHS for £12,000 for the dementia drug Donepezil while dispensing medication worth £233.

Lloyd, admitted fraud at Cardiff Crown Court. The court heard that Lloyd, who part-owned the pharmacy, changed information on tablet and liquid medication by "crossing out and using Tippex".

The fraud was that Lloyd had dispensed the cheaper form of medication but then billed the NHS for the more expensive liquid form. There is no suggestion that other pharmacies in the area were involved and no patients were put at risk.

Judge Neil Bidder said: "This was a carefully and calculated fraud and it was motivated by just one thing—greed. You will never work as a pharmacist again. Your fall from grace is complete." (BBC, 2021)



**FORMER NHS MANAGER DEFRAUDED MID ESSEX NHS TRUST OUT OF £800,000**

A former NHS manager has been jailed for defrauding the health service out of more than £800,000.

Barry Stannard sent false invoices from two companies to Mid Essex Hospital Trust where he worked between 2012 and 2019. He was authorised to approve invoices up to £7,500. Chelmsford Crown Court heard all of his invoices were below this.

Stannard admitted two counts of fraud by false representation and was jailed for five years and four months. The former senior IT manager also admitted two counts of cheating the public revenue relating to the VAT he charged the NHS, despite his companies not being VAT registered.

Amy Oliver, prosecuting, said the companies were set up as suppliers to the NHS and he would forward emails to colleagues which “supposedly came from people working at the companies” in order to further the deception. Ms Oliver said Stannard “encouraged colleagues to choose” quotes from the two companies.

The VAT he incorrectly charged the NHS totalled more than £132,000, the court heard.

Stannard had submitted a nil return declaration of interests form to the NHS trust, but an investigation found he was director of the two companies and had been approving invoices himself. He was suspended in September 2019 and dismissed at a disciplinary hearing held in his absence two months later.

“He admitted neither company had provided any legitimate products or services”, Ms Oliver said.

The court heard Stannard and his wife had bought a “modest home” which needed “significant improvement” and when his wife did not return to work, the costs “all fell to Mr Stannard”.

Judge Tim Walker told Stannard the money “destined for patients... went into your own bank accounts. It’s plain to me that your fraudulent activities had a serious impact on the financial ability of the trust to care for the patients that it existed to care for. Had those monies been available to the trust they could have been spent on additional resources for the treatment of patients”. (BBC, 2021)

**COVID-19 FRAUDSTER JAILED FOR MASS CYBER SCAM**

Teeige Gallagher, pictured right, was jailed on 19 May 2021 for using fake digital messages to trick people into providing their bank details to receive a vaccine. He was sentenced at the Old Bailey to four years and three months’ imprisonment.



Gallagher had been sending out bulk text messages to members of the public claiming to be from various commercial organisations such as banks and from the NHS. The victims were asked for personal information, including questions relating to their bank accounts and bank cards.

Gallagher set up web pages based on the GOV.UK website, which claimed it needed this information to verify who victims were and their entitlement to receive the vaccine.

The police found iPhones at Gallagher’s home containing messages purporting to be from the NHS, various banks and Netflix. On one of the phones more than 2,000 telephone numbers were found, believed to be a list of victims who were sent scam SMS messages. (Crown Prosecution Service, 2021)

# Security Matters

## THE NEW VIOLENCE PREVENTION REDUCTION STANDARD IS HERE!

From 2021/22 a new violence prevention and reduction standard will be incorporated into the NHS Standard Contract.

The Standard is managed by NHS England and NHS Improvement and was endorsed by the Social Partnership Forum on 15 December 2020. The Standard employs a four-step management method, which is Plan, Do, Check and Act, to validate, control and achieve continuous improvement of processes. All providers of NHS-funded services will be required to review compliance and provide board assurance twice yearly.

Throughout 2020/21, 360 Assurance worked hard to establish strong arrangements to support our clients. We have developed a dashboard based toolkit to capture and succinctly report the required information. We are an accredited provider of Prevention and Management of Violence and Aggression (PMVA) training and are able to deliver both bespoke and BTEC certified PMVA training packages covering:

- Physical intervention and physical restraint including breakaway techniques.
- Conflict management.
- Safe and effective use of restraint equipment.

If you would like any further information on PMVA training by 360 Assurance please contact Robert Purseglove (pictured on the right) via [robert.purseglove@nhs.net](mailto:robert.purseglove@nhs.net) or 07827 842 964.



## PARAMEDICS IN ENGLAND TO WEAR BODY CAMERAS TO HELP REDUCE ATTACKS ON FRONTLINE WORKERS

After a successful pilot, the NHS is rolling out body cameras to frontline ambulance staff across the country in a bid to curb violence against ambulance staff.

The trials also showed that the cameras can assist in de-escalating situations where staff are faced with someone being aggressive towards them.

This is timely given that more than 3,500 ambulance staff reported being assaulted in the last year, a 32% rise from five years ago. It is hoped that staff will feel safer wearing the equipment.

Medics will be able to press a button to start recording if patients or the public become aggressive or abusive, with filming made available to the police where needed. (ITV, 2021)

# Anti-Crime Contacts

## Craig Bevan-Davies (Assistant Director Anti-Crime)

*The strategic head for all counter fraud and anti-crime work. Also responsible for: Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Nottingham City Care Partnership, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG.*



✉ [craig.bevan-davies@nhs.net](mailto:craig.bevan-davies@nhs.net)  
☎ 07785445905

## Matthew Curtis (Anti-Crime Team Manager)

*Responsible for: Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Leicester City CCG, East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG and West Leicestershire CCG.*



✉ [matthew.curtis1@nhs.net](mailto:matthew.curtis1@nhs.net)  
☎ 07920138329

## Joanna Clarke (Principal Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for: Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust.*



✉ [joanna.clarke3@nhs.net](mailto:joanna.clarke3@nhs.net)  
☎ 07816272666

## Amanda Smith (Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for: Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust, The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, Doncaster CCG, Bassetlaw CCG and Yorkshire Ambulance Service.*



✉ [amanda.smith61@nhs.net](mailto:amanda.smith61@nhs.net)  
☎ 07920138323

## Ian Morris (Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for: East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Derby and Derbyshire CCG, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.*



✉ [ian.morris7@nhs.net](mailto:ian.morris7@nhs.net)  
☎ 07920138606

## Claire Croft (Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for: Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Rotherham CCG, Sheffield CCG and The One Health Group.*



✉ [claire.croft1@nhs.net](mailto:claire.croft1@nhs.net)  
☎ 07920138354

## Chris Taylor (Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for: DHU, Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust, Barnsley CCG, Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust*



✉ [christaylor2@nhs.net](mailto:christaylor2@nhs.net)  
☎ 07342072907

## Daniel Mason (Trainee Anti-Crime Specialist)

*Responsible for the general support of all anti-crime work whilst training to become an accredited Anti-Crime Specialist.*



✉ [daniel.mason15@nhs.net](mailto:daniel.mason15@nhs.net)  
☎ 07464251746



Counter Fraud Authority

24 Hour Hotline: 0800 028 40 60

Online Reporting Tool:

<https://cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud>