

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.

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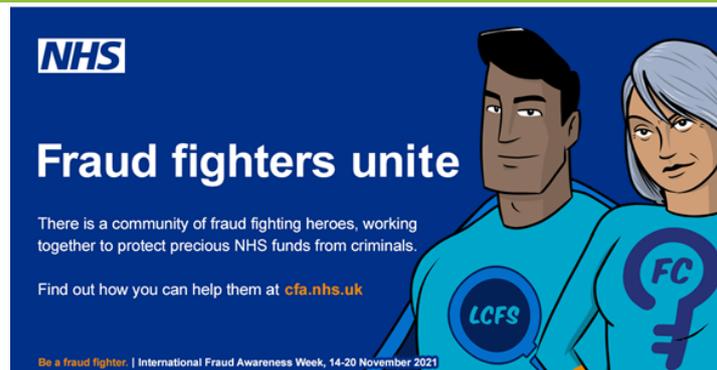
If you wish to report any concerns regarding fraud, bribery or corruption, please contact a member of our team (details can be found on the back page), email counterfraud.360@nhs.net or contact the NHS Counter Fraud Authority Reporting Line on 0800 028 4060.

 Follow @NHSCounterFraud

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International Fraud Awareness Week (IFAW) 14-20 November 2021



Hundreds of organisations around the world will be celebrating International Fraud Awareness Week (IFAW), or Fraud Week.

NHS people, and the population they serve, know all too well that you don't need a cape to be a hero. However, we still want to recognise and celebrate the everyday heroes who protect precious NHS resources from the criminals who target them for personal gain – that's why this weeks campaign features Local Counter Fraud Specialists (LCFSs) and Fraud Champions (FCs) as superheroes.

While some fraud fighters have specialist powers, everyone can and should play a part in tackling fraud against the NHS. How?

- By being vigilant and knowing how to spot fraud
- By knowing how to report fraud if you suspect it (see details below)
- By following anti-fraud advice and guidance designed to stop fraud from happening in the first place
- By spreading the anti-fraud message among your networks

For more information about fraud against the NHS, please visit the NHSCTFA's website, follow them on social media ([Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#)), or speak to your Local LCFS who can provide further advice and support (see contact details on the last page).

Be a fraud fighter. | International Fraud Awareness Week, 14-20 November 2021

COVID VACCINE FRAUDSTER JAILED

A fraudster who tried to inject a 92-year-old woman with a fake COVID-19 vaccine in south-west London has been jailed.

David Chambers, 33, who claimed to work for the NHS and pressed Kathleen Martin's wrist with a "dart-like implement" at her home on 30 December.

He charged Ms Martin £140 and returned five days later to ask for a further £100, Kingston Crown Court heard.

Chambers was jailed for 42 months after he admitted two counts of fraud. He also admitted one count of battery.

Judge Hannah Kinch said Ms Martin was "deliberately targeted" and Chambers had "preyed on an elderly victim in her own home".

Chambers did not inject Ms Martin with anything and did not break her skin, the court heard. (BBC, 2021)

**GP SURGERY MANAGER STOLE £184,000 FROM NHS**

A trusted medical practice manager stole £184,000 of NHS money from the surgery from where she worked.

Leicester Crown Court was told that Kirsty Whawell had obtained her job at Kibworth Medical Centre, Leicestershire, dishonestly by lying about having no criminal convictions when she had previously stolen from an employer.

Whawell admitted a series of frauds at the medical centre between 2013 and early 2019. She wept in the dock during her sentencing hearing, in which she was handed a one-year jail sentence.



The 40-year-old originally joined the practice as a receptionist and worked her way into a £48,000-a-year senior managerial position with responsibility for the finances. When applying, she forged a DBS document to conceal a 2008 conviction for misusing an employer's credit card for her own purposes while working as an au pair. At the surgery, she gave herself unauthorised salary rises of several thousands and covertly paid herself overtime, while consistently telling colleagues she never claimed for extra hours.

Andrew Scott, prosecuting, said invoices and 53 cheques were falsified to make payments, totalling £126,504, into her own account. He said she had a "magic pen" to write the names of payees, such as locum medics, or to pay for services. The surgery's partners signed them thinking they were legitimate, but Whawell would rub out the false payee names to replace with her own. (Mirror, 2021)

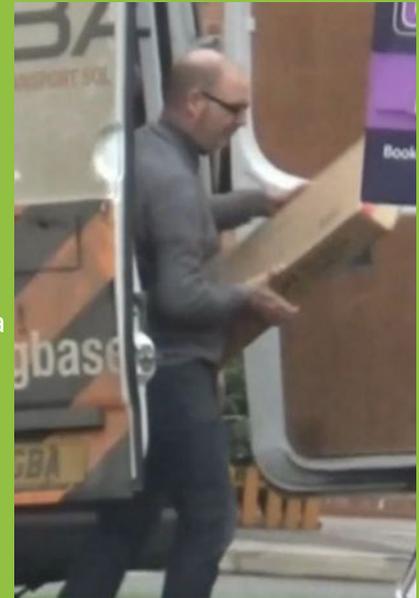
DAD WHO CLAIMED £1.5MILLION IN NHS DISABILITY SCAM IS CAUGHT UNLOADING DELIVERY VAN

A man who carried out a £1.5million NHS scam by claiming he needed a wheelchair has been jailed after being photographed unloading a delivery van.

Darren Dommett, 49, claimed he could barely walk due to medical mistakes and was totally dependent on others' care. But the dad-of-two was pictured carrying heavy flatpack furniture from a delivery van to his Grimsby home. Pictures on social media also showed him enjoying a holiday in Spain without the need of any mobility aids.

Dommett claimed compensation saying NHS doctors' delay in treating a nerve condition in his back had left him severely disabled.

He admitted contempt of court and was jailed for 29 weeks by Judge Nigel Lickley QC at the High Court on 02 July 2021. He will have to pay the NHS at least £85,000 in costs and repayment of wrongly paid compensation.

**BEWARE OF NHS COVID PASS FRAUD**

Action Fraud are reporting that criminals are using the NHS COVID Pass as a way to target the public by convincing them to hand over money, financial details and personal information.

They are sending imitation text messages, emails and making phone calls pretending to be from the NHS, and offering fake vaccine certificates for sale online and through social media.

If you are contacted about your NHS COVID Pass:

1. Be alert to links and attachments in unexpected text messages or emails
2. Do not respond to requests for money, passwords or financial details
3. Challenge: Could it be fake?
4. Use the official NHS COVID Pass website

For information on how you can get your free NHS COVID Pass, visit www.nhs.uk/nhscovidpass

(Action Fraud, 2021)

Did you know?

The NHS Counter Fraud Authority have issued guidance to all NHS staff on how to protect themselves against fraud during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance can be found [here](#) and provides assistance on how to manage unexpected or suspicious emails or text messages, unsolicited calls that ask for your personal or financial details, COVID-19 vaccination fraud, government branded scams and online shopping. It is important for all NHS staff to remain vigilant against the threat that fraud presents. Widen your knowledge today and don't fall a victim to fraud!

NHS SCIENTIST WHO SWAPPED PRICE TAGS IN SOPHISTICATED SCAM GETS SUSPENDED

A NHS scientist has been suspended after carrying out a sophisticated scam to defraud John Lewis of more than £1,600.

Maureen Bennie swapped the price tags of expensive products for cheaper ones before she bought them. She also returned a watch bought in an online sale in the box of a more expensive one and was refunded double what she paid. Ms Bennie worked as a biomedical scientist in the haematology department for Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS.

A disciplinary panel heard Ms Bennie swapped the labels of clothes and an “artwork” for those of less expensive items during a three-month spree in 2017 at the store in Buchanan Galleries, Glasgow.

She was caught after an investigation by the high street giant and pleaded guilty to fraud. She admitted misconduct at the Health and Care Professions Tribunal Service and has been suspended for 12 months. (Daily Express, 2021)

AN ANTI-FRAUD SCHEME HAS DETECTED OR PREVENTED MORE THAN £2BILLION OF FRAUD SINCE IT WAS LAUNCHED 25 YEARS AGO

The National Fraud Initiative plays a critical role in identifying people trying to defraud the public sector, ensuring taxpayers’ money goes towards delivering vital services, instead of ending up in the wrong hands.

- Since 1996, more than £2billion has been detected or prevented through the National Fraud Initiative
- £40,000 benefit cheat was found to own several businesses and a Mercedes with personalised number plates
- 183,000 dodgy disabled parking permits pulled out of circulation thanks to the programme

NHS IT Manager Case study

Data matching enabled by the NFI identified an IT manager working for a hospital trust who was also a sole director of two shell companies. The directorship had not been declared so an investigation by the Local Counter Fraud Specialist, The NHS Counter Fraud Authority and HMRC followed. Investigations revealed that the employee had filed non-trading accounts for both companies during their existence. However, he then produced fraudulent invoices, all under his own £7,500 authorisation limit, and sent them by email from his fictional employees, to obtain £674,000 from the trust. He even added VAT of £132,000 to make the invoices more plausible. A dismissal and prosecution followed and he was sentenced to five years and four months imprisonment. Confiscation proceedings are underway to try to recover the funds. (Cabinet Office, 2021)

Did you know?

November is Fraud Awareness Month! Keep on the lookout for Fraud Awareness and Training sessions taking place at your organisation throughout November. Your Local Counter Fraud Specialist will be distributing posters and information relating to the latest and most common frauds so you can help them detect and prevent fraud within your workplace.

HOSPITAL WORKER STOLE QE PATIENT'S BANK CARDS

A hospital care worker has been jailed after buying biscuits and clothes with bank cards she stole from a patient.

Rebecca Ellis stole two cards from Fred Bromley while he was receiving cancer treatment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham last year. She bought biscuits at an on-site shop to “test” the cards, West Midlands Police said, before spending £126 on clothes and bags from Dorothy Perkins.

She was jailed for nine months at Birmingham Crown Court on 23 September 2021. The 49-year-old had been found guilty of theft and two counts of fraud by false representation at the city’s magistrates court. (BBC, 2021)



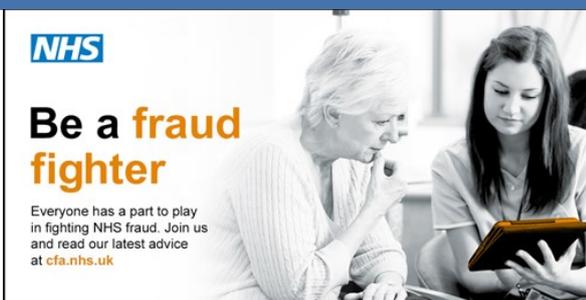
DOCTOR FORGED PRESCRIPTIONS IN THE NAME OF PATIENTS

A doctor forged over 400 prescriptions in the names of three of their patients and obtained medicines to treat themselves for depression. In total, the doctor forged 243 prescriptions in the name of one of their male patients, 173 in the name of another, and 24 using a third patients’ identity. The total value lost to the NHS was over £10,000. Each of the patient identities used by the doctor were entitled to free prescriptions so not only did the doctor fraudulently obtain medication, they didn't pay the prescription fees for that medication either.

The doctor was given a four month jail sentenced suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay £10,047 compensation to the NHS within a year, after they pleaded guilty to three charges of fraud. In addition, the doctor was referred to the General Medical Council to consider their fitness to practice. (TIAA, 2021)

PARCEL DELIVERY TEXTS NOW THE MOST COMMON CON-TRICK

The majority of “smishing” fraud attempts have come through the blitz of parcel delivery texts sent out during the COVID crisis. The BBC have reported that millions of mobile users have received the texts that claim a small payment is needed for a package delivery to be completed. But the texts are a front for fraudsters attempting to steal personal banking details. (BBC, 2021)



MORE THAN £355MILLION LOST TO BANK TRANSFER SCAMS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2021

UK Finance states that current fraud levels pose a ‘national security threat’.

Losses to bank transfer fraud increased by 71% during the first half of 2021, exceeding the amount of money stolen through card fraud for the first time, according to the latest figures from UK Finance.

While victims lost £479million in 2020 to bank transfer fraud, this is set to almost double by the end of 2021 if money continues to be lost at the same rate as the first six months of the year.

What is bank transfer fraud?

Bank transfer fraud is also known as authorised push payment (APP) fraud. It usually involves scammers lying about who they are in a bid to trick victims into transferring money to them. There were 106,164 cases of APP fraud in the first six months of 2021, the majority on personal accounts.

Examples of bank transfer frauds:

Impersonation scams: losses from impersonation scams reached more than £129m, an increase of 123% compared to the same period in 2020. This type of scam involves scammers posing as your bank, solicitor, the NHS or an official body such as HMRC.

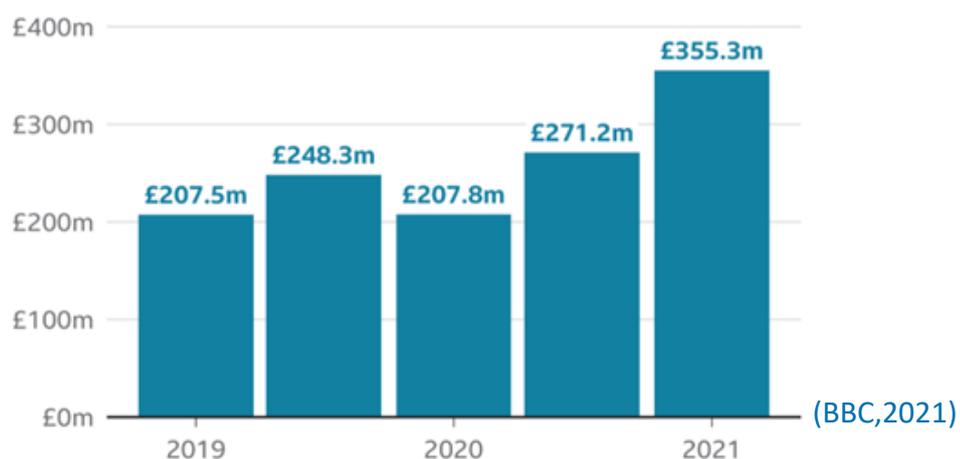
Investment scams: Almost £108m was lost to investment scams, up 95%, which can involve ads on social media for bogus investment products offering high returns to encourage people to part with their cash.

Romance scams: There was also a 62% rise in the amount lost to romance scams, which topped £15m. Fraudsters target people looking for love, often via online dating, befriending them before asking them for money.

Purchase scams: Purchase scams were found to be the most common form of APP fraud. This is when the victim pays in advance for goods and services that are never received. They usually involve the use of an online platform, such as an auction website or social media advertising the sale of a popular product at a low price. (Which?, 2021)

Total losses due to payment scams rose 71%

Authorised Push Payment (APP) scams, total case value



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 or 07827 842 964.



MAN CHARGED WITH ASSAULT AFTER ATTACK ON MANCHESTER GP SURGERY STAFF

A man has been charged with assault after four members of staff at a GP surgery in Manchester were attacked on 17 September 2021. Greater Manchester Police confirmed that a 59-year-old man has been charged with assault, malicious communication and affray following the incident.

Manchester LMC chief executive Dr Tracy Vell tweeted that a GP had been left with a fractured skull while other staff has suffered 'deep lacerations' in the attack. Dr Vell warned the health secretary that frontline staff should not be left to deal with the frustration of angry patients. NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard also condemned the attack, stressing violence against NHS staff 'is never acceptable' as she wished the victims a 'speedy recovery'. (GP Online, 2021)

Anti-Crime Contacts

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Counter Fraud Authority
24 Hour Hotline: 0800 028 40 60
Online Reporting Tool:
<https://cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud>