



Powered by The Valley Health System and Kindred Hospitals



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HEALTH CARE FRAUD

Takedown by the Department of Justice

Last week, the U.S. Department of Justice announced a record \$14.6 BILLION health care fraud takedown, the biggest in history.

Criminal charges were filed against more than 300 defendants including nearly 100 doctors, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and other medical professionals. The takedown was led by the Health Care Fraud Unit of the Justice Department. The plan involved coordinated federal and state law enforcement with experts from U.S. Attorneys' offices, HHS-OIG, the FBI, DEA and other agencies, allowing them to leverage cloud computing, AI, and advanced analytics to identify health care fraud schemes.

Among the fraud discovered was \$10.6 Billion in fraudulent claims for DME, particularly urinary catheters. The fraud was accomplished using the stolen identities of more than a million Medicare patients and by exploiting the U.S. financial system to launder the proceeds.

This takedown is of utmost interest to Silver State ACO. In 2024, SSACO noticed a dramatic rise in DME costs, and reported it to CMS. Other ACOs also noticed the increase and NAACOS (the National Association of ACOs) pursued the issue with CMS. CMS has been generally quiet about the scheme. Now that the fraud has been disclosed and confirmed, we are hopeful that CMS's numbers will be adjusted to reflect corrected costs and benchmarks for 2024 such that determination of success (i.e. earning Shared Savings) is valid.

Fraudulent wound care is also being investigated. At the beginning of 2025, SSACO noticed a sharp increase in skin grafts and wound care. As done in the previous year, SSACO spoke with our CMS coordinator. It remains to be seen if CMS does reevaluation of claims associated with wound care.

“Health care fraud drains critical resources from programs intended to help people who truly need medical care,” said FBI Director Kash Patel. “Today’s announcement demonstrates our commitment to pursuing those who exploit the system for personal gain. With more than \$13 billion in fraud uncovered, this is the largest takedown for this initiative to date. Together, the FBI and our law enforcement partners will continue to hold accountable those who steal from the American people and undermine our health care systems.”

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