



The NHS Counter Fraud Authority:
**A new organisation
fighting fraud in the NHS**

NHS fraud. Spot it. Report it. Together we stop it.

Welcome

All of us rely on the NHS at some point during our lifetimes. Unfortunately, some people think they can exploit the NHS for financial gain. Here at the NHS Counter Fraud Authority we estimate that fraud, bribery and corruption affecting the NHS cost the public purse £1.25 billion per annum. These crimes affect us all and take away important funds from frontline NHS care.

The NHS Counter Fraud Authority's role is to stop this by identifying, investigating and preventing fraud and other economic crimes affecting the NHS.

Fraud is a growing problem and UK residents are now more likely to experience fraud than any other type of crime. The NHS has to deal with both sophisticated organised crime and a high volume of lower level frauds. These challenges mean that the response to fraud must be coordinated, sustained and highly professional.

The government has been working for some time to improve the effectiveness of counter fraud work across all public services. The NHS Counter Fraud Authority works closely with the Cabinet Office and other agencies across government on this agenda. We also firmly believe in sharing information and expertise with our counter fraud partners in the public sector and beyond.

This brochure provides an introduction to the NHS Counter Fraud Authority, explaining our approach to tackling fraud and setting out our priorities for 2017-2020.

We hope you will join us in the fight against NHS fraud.



Simon Hughes
Chair



Susan Frith
Chief Executive Officer



Who we are

With over 1.3 million staff, the NHS is one of the largest employers in the world. Its annual budget, paid for from the public purse, is over £105 billion. As a large and complex organisation that is facing significant financial challenges, the NHS must constantly change and adapt to meet people's health needs.

The NHS Counter Fraud Authority (NHSCFA) is a new organisation which has been tasked to lead the fight against fraud, bribery and corruption in the NHS. As a special health authority focused entirely on counter fraud work, the NHSCFA is independent from other NHS bodies and is directly accountable to the Department of Health (DH).

Our mission is to lead the fight against fraud affecting the NHS and wider health service, and protect vital resources intended for patient care.

Our vision is for an NHS that can protect its valuable resources from fraud.

Our purpose is to lead the NHS in protecting its resources by using intelligence to understand the nature of fraud risks, investigate serious and complex fraud, reduce its impact and drive improvements.

The NHSCFA's remit covers the NHS and the wider health service in England. In Wales we provide specialist counter fraud support functions to the Welsh Government under section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

We employ over 170 staff in three offices in London, Coventry and Newcastle.

Our values

All NHSCFA staff are expected to act in accordance with our six principles of good practice:

- fairness
- expertise
- integrity
- objectivity
- professionalism
- vision



“Fraud in the healthcare system not only undermines public confidence in the NHS but also diverts valuable resources away from caring for patients - it is estimated that prescription fraud alone costs the NHS £217 million each year. We created the NHS Counter Fraud Authority so that for the first time there is a dedicated NHS organisation to tackle health service fraud and corruption and bring fraudsters to justice.”

**Lord O'Shaughnessy,
Health Minister**



We employ over
170 staff



Based in **3 offices** in
London, Coventry and Newcastle



Call our **24 hour** reporting line
anonymously on **0800 028 40 60**



You can also report **online** at
www.cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud

Fighting NHS fraud

In 2016-17 losses to fraud in the NHS were estimated at £1.25 billion per annum – enough money to pay for over 40,000 staff nurses, or to purchase over 5,000 frontline ambulances. This is taxpayers' money that is taken away from patient care and falls into the hands of criminals.

When we say 'fraud', we refer to a range of economic crimes, such as fraud, bribery and corruption or any other illegal acts committed by an individual or group of individuals to obtain a financial or professional gain.

Those who commit fraud against the NHS are a minority, however they are having a serious impact on us all. Experience shows that this minority can include all kinds of people, from patients to NHS staff, from contractors to members of the public and organised criminals. Unfortunately there is no such thing as a 'typical' NHS fraudster.

Fraud against the NHS takes many forms; here are just a few examples:

- **False claims.** This can range from patients claiming for free treatment when they are not entitled to it, to NHS professionals claiming money for services they have not provided.



- **Payment diversion fraud.** This happens when fraudsters trick an NHS organisation into paying money to them, for example by pretending to be from one of the organisation's suppliers.
 - **Procurement fraud.** This relates to the purchasing of goods and services by an NHS organisation. An example is bid rigging, when bidders agree between themselves to eliminate competition, denying the organisation a fair price or leading to the delivery of poor quality goods or services.
 - **Misrepresentation of qualifications or experience.** This occurs when someone applying for a job claims to have qualifications or experience they do not actually have. This is particularly serious in senior and medical positions.
- **Timesheet fraud.** This happens when staff falsify their timesheets, for example to obtain payment for hours they haven't actually worked.
- Fraud has been identified as the crime that people are most likely to experience in the UK, and no individual or organisation is immune from the risk. Fraud against the NHS has a direct impact on the resources available for patient care. The NHSCFA is equipped and determined to lead the fight against NHS fraud, working closely with our stakeholders in the NHS and beyond.

Estimated losses to fraud in some key areas of NHS spend, 2015-2016



Our objectives

Our vision is for an NHS which can protect its valuable resources from fraud. To help us achieve this, our strategy for 2017-2020 sets out five key objectives:

1

Deliver the Department of Health strategy, vision and strategic plan and lead counter fraud activity in the NHS in England

2

Be the single expert intelligence led organisation providing a centralised investigation capacity for complex economic crime matters in the NHS

3

Lead, guide and influence the improvement of standards in counter fraud work

4

Take the lead and encourage fraud reporting across the NHS and wider health group

5

Invest in and develop NHSCFA staff



"We will work hard to support the NHS Counter Fraud Authority. Our mission is to ensure the NHS gets the help it needs to continue to provide safe, high quality care while managing its finances effectively. Fraud in the NHS is unacceptable and is harmful to patients, staff and the NHS as a whole."

**Jim Mackey, Chief Executive,
NHS Improvement**

A surgeon wearing glasses and blue surgical scrubs is shown from the side and back, focused on performing a procedure on a patient's hip. The patient's leg is extended, and the surgeon's hands are visible near the hip joint.

The £1.25 billion
lost to fraud each year
equates to the cost of

116,000
hip replacements

Our expertise

The NHSCFA is the centre of excellence for combating fraud, bribery and corruption against the NHS.

Our experienced and committed staff includes specialists in intelligence, fraud prevention, computer forensics, fraud investigation, financial investigation, data analysis and communications.



We provide a range of specialised services to tackle NHS fraud.



Intelligence – As an intelligence-led organisation, the NHSCFA uses the latest in intelligence and information gathering techniques to build an accurate picture of the fraud risks facing the NHS, to inform preventative action and to support investigations.



Investigations – We are experts in investigating the most serious, complex and high-profile cases of fraud, and work closely with the police and the Crown Prosecution Service to bring offenders to justice. Our specialist financial investigators have powers to recover NHS money lost to fraud, and we have a forensic computing team who collect and analyse digital evidence.



Fraud prevention – We develop a range of targeted fraud prevention solutions to address identified fraud risks. This may include reviewing and redesigning whole systems or developing tailored guidance or other solutions.



Standards – We set standards for counter fraud work across the NHS. We assess commissioners and providers of NHS services for compliance with the standards through our quality assurance programme.



Staff and organisational development – Our staff are the NHSCFA's most important asset. We are committed to developing a skilled workforce, in line with the government's counter fraud professional standards. We carry out internal quality assurance, ensuring continued compliance with legislation and professional standards.



Communications – By raising awareness of fraud against the NHS and publicising the work of the NHSCFA, we encourage NHS staff, other stakeholders and the public to join the fight against NHS fraud.



Digitalisation and technology – We strive to be a digital by default organisation, using technology to make our work quicker, smarter and more data-driven.

Working in partnership

While it is the NHSCFA's responsibility to fight fraud against the NHS, we can't do this on our own. We work with local counter fraud specialists and with a wide range of partner organisations, including NHS England and NHS Improvement, to deliver the full range of counter fraud work across the NHS.

Sharing information is an increasingly important part of the fight against fraud and we have data sharing agreements in place with other regulatory and law enforcement agencies. This is vital as criminals often operate in multiple sectors and across geographical boundaries.

We also work closely with the Cabinet Office on the development of the government counter fraud standards and the creation of a government-wide counter fraud profession.



"The NHS is committed to providing safe and high quality care to patients while securing the best possible value for taxpayers' money. It is essential that this ambition is not undermined by fraud. So we welcome the creation of the new NHS Counter Fraud Authority."

Paul Baumann, Chief Financial Officer, NHS England

The £1.25 billion
lost to fraud each year
equates to the cost of
40,000
staff nurses



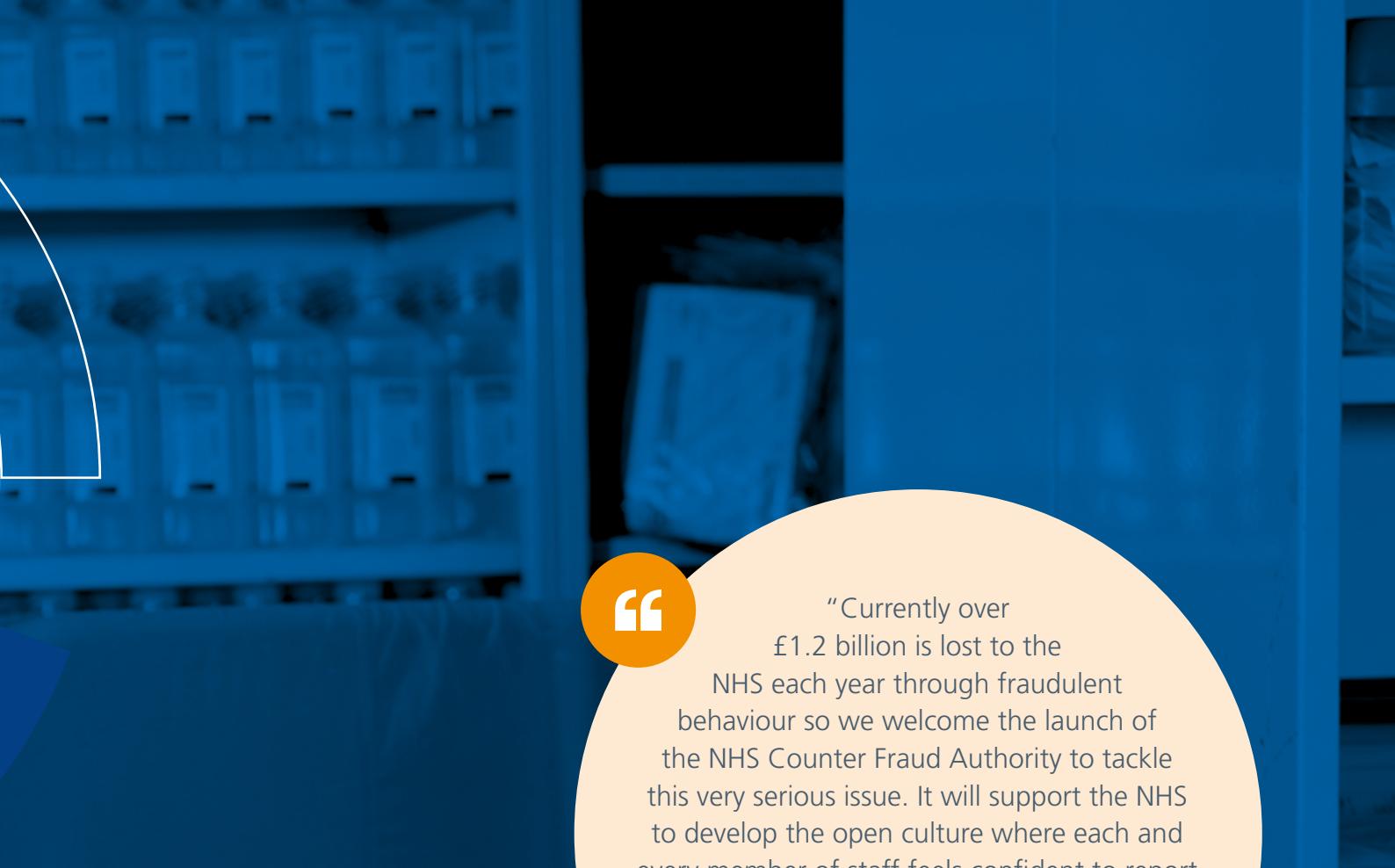
How you can help

Everyone has a part to play in fighting fraud. Being aware of the risk and remaining vigilant are the most important first steps, followed by knowing how to report any suspicions or concerns you may have about fraud.

It is easy to report fraud, bribery or corruption affecting the NHS. You can call our anonymous, 24-hour reporting line on **0800 028 40 60** (powered by Crimestoppers) or you can report online, completely confidentially, at www.cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud.

By reporting fraud you can help the NHSCFA to ensure offenders are brought to justice and that money is returned to the NHS to care for patients. Reporting fraud will also help us to form a better picture of the ongoing fraud risks and trends so that the NHS is better equipped to prevent it.

**NHS fraud.
Spot it.
Report it.
Together we stop it.**



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“Currently over £1.2 billion is lost to the NHS each year through fraudulent behaviour so we welcome the launch of the NHS Counter Fraud Authority to tackle this very serious issue. It will support the NHS to develop the open culture where each and every member of staff feels confident to report any concerns. It is unacceptable that the money lost each year is depriving patients of investment in their services.”

Danny Mortimer,
*Chief Executive,
NHS Employers*



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“We look forward to working successfully with the NHS Counter Fraud Authority, as we have done with its predecessors. At Crimestoppers we have long provided phone lines for NHS staff to call with 100 per cent anonymity to report examples of fraud. If they encounter something suspicious it can be hard for NHS staff to take the next step to report it. With our anonymous reporting service, we can give staff the confidence to speak up.”

Mark Hallas,
*Chief Executive Officer,
Crimestoppers*

NHS Counter Fraud Authority

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