



Medical recruitment agent masterminded multiple NHS fraud conspiracies (£73,000)

Seven people sentenced for conspiracies to defraud and a money-laundering offence after investigation by NHS Counter Fraud Authority

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A medical recruitment agent, along with four health care assistants and a nurse he had persuaded to defraud the NHS, have all been sentenced at Kingston-upon-Hull Crown Court (18 May 2018) for conspiracy to defraud.

Charles Elad, 46, was working as a recruitment officer for ID Medical at the time of the offences. Each of the five workers was convicted of separate fraud conspiracies with Elad. His wife, Tanyi Elad, was convicted of a money laundering offence.

The total loss to the NHS was £72,991.11. Various NHS hospitals in England were targeted, including Scunthorpe General, Royal Blackburn, Shrewsbury and Darlington.

Elad enlisted George Kiberu, Violet Nhende, Abosede Amusan, Ernest Anonyo and Rilindis Bessem to submit large numbers of fraudulent timesheets to the recruitment agency, who were unaware of the fraudulent activity taking place. The agency workers were subsequently paid for the unworked shift. The agency then unknowingly invoiced the various Trusts for these shifts.

Once an agency worker had been paid for these ghost 'shifts', Charles Elad would then request they make a payment to him, using his wife Tanyi Esekang Elad's bank account to hide the transactions.

The initial investigation started at the local level. As they realised the problem extended to other areas, the Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) for Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust, referred the case up to the national body.

NHSCFA investigators were able to prove in court both that Charles Elad had conspired with the other defendants, and how he had been the orchestrator of their activity.

The trial began on 23 April 2018. Nhende, Kiberu and Anonyo pleaded guilty to their charges, with the remaining defendants entering not guilty pleas and going to trial.

Charles Elad received three years' imprisonment. He had denied five counts of conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation and one count of fraud. He was

convicted of four counts of conspiracy to commit fraud and one count of fraud, with the remaining conspiracy count left to lie on file.

Abosede Amusan (38) and **Rilindis Bessem** (39) received 16 month and six month prison sentences respectively. They each denied one count of conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation but were convicted by the jury.

Violet Nhende (49), **George Kiberu** (50) and **Ernest Anonyo** (40) received prison sentences (all suspended for two years) - of eight months, 15 months and eight months respectively. They each admitted one count of conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation.

Tanyi Esekang Elad (38) denied converting criminal property but was convicted by the jury. She received a four month prison sentence, suspended for two years.

Richard Rippin, Head of Operations at the NHSCFA, said today:

"The NHSCFA is delighted with the outcome of this investigation. Although this crime was orchestrated by Charles Elad, all seven conspired to deliberately defraud multiple NHS organisations. They had been employed to care for NHS patients, but instead took resources away from patient care for their own personal gain.

The result demonstrates the value of local and national NHS bodies working in partnership to tackle fraud. It sends a message to anyone under the mistaken impression that NHS funds are an easy target for fraud, that they will be caught".

The sentencing judge issued a commendation to both the national and local NHS investigators involved.

NHSCFA action will now continue under the Proceeds of Crime Act to recover the money lost to the NHS.

If you suspect that anyone is committing fraud or another economic crime against the NHS, tell NHSCFA about it – you can call our 24-hour, confidential reporting line 0800 028 40 60 or visit our main website to report online: www.cfa.nhs.uk

"NHS fraud. Spot it, report it, together we stop it"

For more information contact the NHSCFA press office on 020 7895 4519/4524

Notes to Editors

1. **Offences in detail:** **Charles Elad** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977 and one count of Fraud, contrary to section 1 of the Fraud Act 2006. **Tanyi Esekang Elad** guilty of Converting Criminal Property, contrary to section 327 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. **George Kiberu** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977. **Violet Nhende** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to

section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977. **Abosede Amusan** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977. **Ernest Anonyo** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977. **Rilindis Bessem** guilty of Conspiracy to commit fraud by False Representation, contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Law Act 1977.

2. For more details visit the website www.cfa.nhs.uk
3. NHS Counter Fraud Authority is a Special Health Authority established under the NHS Act 2006 as amended.
4. When NHSCFA uses the term 'fraud', we refer to a range of economic crimes, such as fraud, bribery, corruption or any other illegal acts committed by an individual or group of individuals to obtain a financial or professional gain.
5. NHSCFA will also support the work of the NHS Counter Fraud Service (Wales)
6. NHSCFA will work closely with NHS Local Counter Fraud Specialists across the NHS in England to ensure that healthcare crime is tackled and a culture of fraud prevention and deterrence is in place.
7. There are some 300 professionally trained and accredited Local Counter Fraud Specialists in place within health bodies across England and Wales.