

Healthcare fraud news briefing

March 2010

1. Bribery and fraud – worldwide famous German transplant surgeon imprisoned

12.03.2010

The well known transplant surgeon Professor Broelsch has been sentenced to three years behind bars. The judges ordered this sentence for the former Chief Doctor at the Essen University Hospital due to instances of bribery, coercion, fraud and tax evasion. The 65-year-old doctor seems to have, amongst others, persuaded terminally ill cancer patients to make "voluntary" donations to the University Hospital so that they could receive quicker care. The professor's defense tried to ask for a fine for tax evasion in court but was unsuccessful on this occasion.

2. NHS fraudster says that she stole GBP 1,500 'to support her family'

12/03/2010

Further to an investigation of the Public Prosecutor's Office of Naples, which took place after a survey had been started by the Finance corps, 37 people have been sent to trial for obtaining the reimbursement of health expenses which never occurred. A criminal organization, which helped these individuals evade taxes, in which well-known white collars operated - was headed by Rosaria Dino, owner of a luxurious study of commercial advisors in the centre of the city. The trial will begin April 14 before the third section of the Court of Naples.

3. NHS Doctor comments on the current state of "whistle blowing" measures

16/03/2010

Dr. Crippen, an NHS doctor who writes for the Guardian, has criticized the Patient Advice and Liaison Service, an in house complaints service and the NHS "whistle blowing" policy in general. This criticism is based the current state of Dr. Kim Holt, a whistle blower within the NHS who has been put on leave for reporting her concerns. She has also not been given an indication on whether she will be able to return to work.

4. Hospitals to be forced to disclose mistakes

29. 03. 2010

It has been claimed that hospitals are covering up potentially fatal mistakes by receiving misleading information from doctors. Fortunately, under a new system of regulation effective from April 1 2010, 381 NHS trusts have to register with the Care Quality Commission, the health watchdog. But this reform still does not include doctors having to share relevant information with families. Just last year, £870 million was given in compensation for NHS patients who were the victims of mistakes.

5. The professor, his sex parties and the £175,000 fraud

29.03.2010

It has been revealed that one of Britain's most respected pharmacists has admitted to fraudulently claiming almost £175,000 of public money for expenses in order to cover the cost of a non-existent assistant. He was awarded an MBE in 2005 for his services to the NHS which was when pretended to hire a locum to cover his absences at a pharmacy practice whilst he was working as an advisor to a health watchdog. But police discovered that he had sold his practice years earlier and instead this money was used for drugs and sex parties. Prof Butler, a married father-of-five, is going to be sentenced on Monday after pleading guilty at an earlier hearing to fraud and possession of class A drugs. He faces a maximum prison sentence of 10 years.

6. Toxic Chinese medicine still on sale

29.03.2010

A Chinese medicine which can cause cancer is on sale in the UK despite the fact that it was meant to be taken off the market, a regulator said today. More than 900 packs of the herbal medicine Jingzhi Kesou Tan Chuan Wan are thought to be on sale even though a recall has been made last month by the distributor. Packs of the product, brought to the UK from China, have had a new English label put on to hide the original label which has the Chinese symbols for Aristolochia, a banned toxic and carcinogenic derivative of a plant. If one is exposed to these acids they could suffer from kidney failure and cancer, particularly of the urinary tract, the MHRA said.