



### ELFT case

Staff member worked elsewhere whilst on Sick Leave  
See page 3



### NELFT Case

Nurse prosecuted for drug theft  
See page 4

Winter 2025

# fraudtalk

**For Staff and Partners of East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), and External Stakeholders**

**Produced by ELFT's Counter Fraud Service – Protecting Resources, Safeguarding Care**

## In this issue

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- Reporting Fraud: The Do's and Don'ts
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### Editorial Note – From the Head of Counter Fraud

Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of Fraudtalk, produced for all colleagues across East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), and our valued external partners and suppliers.

Fraud within the NHS doesn't just impact finances it undermines patient care, public confidence, and our shared mission to provide safe and effective services. Every member of staff and every organisation we work with plays an important role in protecting NHS resources and upholding integrity.

ELFT's Counter Fraud Service delivers an in-house counter fraud service to East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) and also provides North East London NHS Foundation Trust's (NELFT) Counter Fraud Service. Our joint work ensures both Trusts benefit from consistent, collaborative, and proactive approaches to fraud prevention and detection. Working together, we can ensure that our Trusts remain transparent, accountable, and resilient against fraud.

By staying vigilant, reporting concerns, and promoting transparency, we can ensure that resources are used where they matter most delivering care to our patients.

**Zenda Butler**

Head of Counter Fraud

# fraudtalk

This edition of *FraudTalk* has been compiled by Zenda Butler, Head of Counter Fraud. You'll find information about local and national fraud cases as well as general advice about fraud issues.

Reminder – what to do if you suspect fraud

## Do

- Report suspicions immediately to your Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) or the NHS Counter Fraud Authority (NHSCFA).
- Keep your concerns confidential and factual
- Preserve any relevant evidence (emails, invoices, timesheets)
- Remain alert to unusual behaviour or requests, particularly around finance, procurement, or recruitment.

## Don't

- Discuss suspicions on social media or in public areas.
- Conduct your own investigation or confront individuals
- Ignore concerns because you're uncertain — report them confidentially.
- Delay reporting; fraud can escalate quickly.

Report fraud in confidence:

Contact your local LCFS at ELFT/NELFT by email or telephone

NHS Fraud and Corruption

Reporting Line: 0800 028 4060

Online: [www.cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud](http://www.cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud)

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## Introducing the team



### Zenda Butler

Zenda is the Head of Counter Fraud at ELFT. Also the lead Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) for ELFT.



### Beth Raistrick

Beth Raistrick is the LCFS responsible for all referrals relating to fraud and bribery within ELFT's Bedfordshire and Luton services.



### Daniel Higgs

Daniel is the LCFS for NELFT and works across NELFT sites.

The Counter Fraud Service is here to support staff and stakeholders in recognising, preventing, and reporting fraud.

## Failure to Prevent Fraud: What You Need to Know

In September 2025, a new Failure to Prevent Fraud came into force, as part of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act (ECCTA). This is a significant new corporate offence. This legislation requires organisations, including NHS suppliers and partners, to have effective anti-fraud systems in place. It represents a shift from reactive investigations to proactive prevention.

### What Is the Offence?

An organisation commits this offence if:-

A person associated with it (employee, agent, contractor, or subsidiary) commits fraud to benefit the organisation, or its clients, and  
- The organisation did not have reasonable procedures to prevent it.

### Who Does It Apply To?

The offence applies to large organisations that meet two of the following criteria:

- More than 250 employees- Turnover above £36 million
- Assets exceeding £18 million

Smaller organisations may be considered "associated persons" if they provide services for or on behalf of a large organisation

This means that a large organisation could be prosecuted for failing to prevent fraud if an employee or agent of a smaller organisation, acting on their behalf, commits fraud. Therefore, large organisations will require smaller organisations, who are considered associated persons, to have in place reasonable procedures to prevent fraud.

Although not all the associated persons that NELFT and ELFT engage with, such as suppliers, partners, and contractors, will fall under this legislation. ELFT and NELFT must be confident that those they work with maintain robust anti-fraud arrangements.

### Reasonable Procedures: What Good Looks Like

- Comprehensive fraud risk assessments
- Clear, accessible anti-fraud policies
- Training and awareness for staff and partners
- Due diligence on suppliers and contractors
- Confidential reporting mechanisms (such as whistleblowing hotlines)

The key message is "Prevention is no longer just best practice — it's a legal expectation"

# Seasonal Scams: Staying Vigilant This Christmas

As the festive season approaches, many of us are looking forward to a well-earned break — spending time with loved ones, gift shopping, and enjoying a little cheer. Unfortunately, it's also the busiest time of year for fraudsters. Criminals know people are distracted, shopping online, and more likely to let their guard down.

In the NHS, we pride ourselves on protecting public funds — and that includes safeguarding ourselves, our colleagues, and our organisations from scams and fraud attempts that can strike both personally and professionally.

Here are some of the most common scams to look out for this Christmas and how to stay safe.

**1. Delivery and Courier Scams**  
Scammers send fake texts or emails pretending to be from Royal Mail, Evri, DPD, or other couriers, claiming that a parcel couldn't be delivered until a small "redelivery fee" is paid. Don't click on any links in these messages — they often lead to convincing fake websites that steal your card details or personal data.

✓ Tip: Always check the sender's address carefully and go directly to the courier's official website if you're expecting a parcel.

**2. Online Shopping Scams**  
Fraudsters set up fake websites or social media pages offering high-demand gifts or big discounts. You pay — and either receive nothing, or a cheap counterfeit.

✓ Tip: Stick to trusted retailers, check reviews, and be cautious of deals that look "too good to be true." Always pay by credit card or through secure platforms like PayPal for extra protection.

**3. Charity and Festive Fundraising Fraud**

The season of giving can bring out the best in people — and the worst in fraudsters. Be wary of unsolicited charity appeals, especially on social media or via email.

✓ Tip: Before donating, check if a charity is registered with the Charity Commission. Within the NHS, ensure all workplace fundraising is authorised and transparent.

**4. Phishing Emails and Fake Invoices**  
Fraudsters know many NHS staff handle payments, orders, or invoices — and they may target you with emails that look like they're from known suppliers or managers.

✓ Tip: Always double-check bank details and sender addresses. If something feels "off," verify it independently before transferring funds or sharing information.

Remember:

- Always stop and think before responding to unexpected requests at work and in your personal life.
- Report suspicious activity in the workplace to your Local Counter Fraud Specialist, and outside of work to Action Fraud - [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk).
- Protecting NHS resources helps ensure every penny goes where it's needed most to patient care.

**Together, we can help keep our NHS and ourselves safe this Christmas.**



Photo: Canva Magic Media

## Highlights of the work undertaken at NELFT since 1st April 2025

26 referrals received

£1138.70 recovered and more in progress – remove the pence on all figures and include “,”

1 dismissal, 1 agency worker blocked from working and 4 successful prosecutions

£55,363.30 fraud prevented

10 recommendations

## Highlights of the work undertaken at ELFT since 1st April 2025

41 referrals

4 dismissals, 1 final written warning and 3 successful prosecutions

£8127.89 fraud prevented and £337.68 non-fraud prevented

£34,385.10 recovered

20 recommendations





# ELFT cases

## Staff Dismissed Over Undeclared Secondary Work and overlapping shifts

A Trust employee was dismissed after an investigation found they had not declared secondary employment with a nursing agency. They also worked numerous back-to-back and overlapping shifts, often exceeding 60 hours per week and missing required rest breaks.

This breach of Trust policy and the Working Time Directive posed risks to their own safety and that of patients and colleagues.

The investigation also raised concerns about salary paid for hours not actually worked.

Key Takeaways for Staff:

- Always declare any secondary employment to your Trust.
- Adhere to rest periods and working hour limits under the Working Time Directive.
- Understand that breaches of policy can have serious employment and legal consequences.

## Three Former ELFT Staff Sentenced Over Covid Vaccine Fraud

During the Covid pandemic, three former ELFT employees exploited their access to the National Immunisation and Vaccine System (NIVS) to record fake Covid vaccinations. Members of the public paid £500 each to be fraudulently marked as double jabbed—despite not receiving the vaccine—allowing them to obtain Covid passes for travel and events.

A complex investigation by the Counter Fraud Team and the Met Police Cyber Team uncovered the scheme. Two defendants received four years and four months in prison, and one received one year and seven months, reflecting the serious threat to public health and NHS systems.

Following a disciplinary process, one defendant was dismissed for gross misconduct; the other two were unaffected due to termination of their bank posts.

The case underscores the need for robust, “fraud-proofed” systems. Weaknesses in NIVS, such as unrestricted remote access and the ability to record vaccinations at any centre, created opportunities for this abuse.

## Breach of Sick Leave Policies Leads to Disciplinary Action

A staff member at ELFT worked two nursing shifts during sick leave without authorisation and then gave false information about it during a Return-to-Work interview.

This breached ELFT’s Managing Absence, Disciplinary, and Counter Fraud and Bribery Policies. Following an internal investigation, taking into account the full circumstances of the allegation, the employee received a formal disciplinary sanction, reinforcing the Trust’s zero-tolerance approach to dishonesty.



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# NELFT cases

## Misuse of National Immunisation and Vaccination System (NIVS)

An investigation was undertaken by the Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) at the Trust concerning an employee’s misuse of their access to the National Immunisation and Vaccination System during the Covid Pandemic. NIVS was used to record Covid vaccinations administered.

The employee had used their access to NIVS to fraudulently enter records to show members of the public had received a Covid vaccination when in fact they had not been immunised.

The employee was dismissed from the Trust.

A criminal investigation was undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Cyber Crime Team with the assistance of the LCFS.

The former employee was sentenced to a two year custodial sentence for fraud by false representation, under the Fraud Act 2006.

## Failure to disclose dismissal from previous employer

An investigation found that an employee failed to disclose a dismissal from a previous employer and also that they had falsified their referee and failed to disclose the referrer was their wife.

The subject failed to mention their previous employer as part of the recruitment process and therefore no reference was requested.

The allegation had come to light as a member of staff on the ward was aware the subject was dismissed as they were involved in the disciplinary process.

A disciplinary process upheld two fraud allegations; failure to disclose a previous dismissal and false representation of a referee, and the subject was dismissed from the Trust for gross misconduct.

# National cases

## NHS Doctor Jailed for £268k Fraud

A former NHS doctor has been sentenced to three years in prison for defrauding the NHS of £268,000. They falsely claimed to be unfit for work while secretly carrying out paid shifts at other trusts, forcing their employer to cover locum costs.

The judge condemned the dishonesty, noting the public expects doctors to act with integrity. The case highlights the need for vigilance around sickness reporting and secondary employment.

Source: NHS Counter Fraud Authority (NHSCFA)

## GP Practice Manager Jailed for £144k NHS Fraud

A former GP practice manager defrauded the NHS of £144,000 by diverting practice funds into personal accounts and falsifying records. Caught through internal checks, they pleaded guilty and received a suspended two-year sentence with electronic monitoring. Recovery of the stolen funds is underway, highlighting the importance of strong financial controls and vigilance.

Recovery action is being pursued under the Proceeds of Crime Act to reclaim some of the stolen funds.

Source: NHS Counter Fraud Authority (NHSCFA)

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## Fraudtalk Guess the words challenge

**Theme: "Fraud Awareness in the NHS"**

1. Illegal act of gaining money by deception (5 letters)
2. Always report suspicions to your \_\_\_\_\_ (4 letters)
3. Law introducing the Failure to Prevent Fraud offence (5 letters)
4. Never accept a \_\_\_\_\_ that could influence your decisions (4 letters)
5. Electronic scam emails are known as \_\_\_\_\_ (8 letters)

**Answers: 1. FRAUD | 2. LCFS | 3. ECCTA | 4. GIFT | 5. PHISHING**

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**Zenda Butler**  
07908 194 432  
[zenda.butler@nhs.net](mailto:zenda.butler@nhs.net)  
Trust HQ, Finance  
Department, Robert Dolan  
House, 9 Alie Street, London  
E1 8DE



**Beth Raistrick**  
07908 425 280  
[bethan.raistrick@nhs.net](mailto:bethan.raistrick@nhs.net)  
8th Floor, Charter House,  
Alma Street, Luton LU1 2PJ



**Daniel Higgs**  
07787 274066  
[Daniel.higgs1@nhs.net](mailto:Daniel.higgs1@nhs.net)  
CEME Centre – West Wing,  
Marsh Way, Rainham, RM13  
8GQ