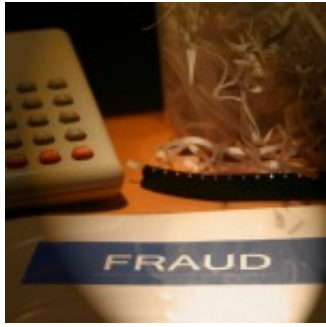


Additional Cities will have HEAT Teams in 2011



(August 27, 2010): Yesterday, Attorney General Eric Holder and U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius conducted the second of a planned series of “Regional Health Care Fraud Prevention Summits.”

In addition to these agency heads, participants learned of current and additional planned initiatives from a number of Federal and State law enforcement officials. The first summit was recently conducted in Miami, Florida. This summit was held in Los Angeles, California.

Describing the progress made in the last fiscal year, Attorney General Holder noted that:

"In just the last fiscal year, we've won or negotiated more than \$1.6 billion in judgments and settlements, returned more than \$2.5 billion to the Medicare Trust Fund, opened thousands of new criminal and civil health care fraud investigations, reached an all-time high in the number of health care fraud defendants charged, and stopped numerous large-scale fraud schemes in their tracks."

Notably, Attorney General Holder also made it clear that the government's joint Health Care Fraud Prevention and Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) program is slated for further expansion over the next year. As he noted:

"HEAT's impact has been recognized by President Obama, whose FY 2011 budget request includes an additional \$60 million to expand our network of Strike Forces to additional cities. With these new resources, and our continued commitment to collaboration, I have no doubt we'll be able to extend HEAT's record of achievement. And this record is extraordinary. (emphasis added).

These funds will be to supplement, not supplant, existing health care fraud enforcement efforts currently underway. While the additional cities slated for HEAT expansion were not announced at this event, all health care providers, regardless of location, should be especially vigilant in their efforts to ensure that Medicare coding and billing practices regulating the items and services they are providing must comply

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with applicable statutory and agency requirements.

Should you have questions regarding a health care fraud issue, you may call Robert W. Liles or another of our attorneys. Call 1 (800) 475-1906 for a free consultation.