

CCHR Encourages the Public to Report Psychiatric Abuse and Fraud

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), a mental health industry watchdog, operates a free hotline to report abuse.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, March 31, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With the recent passage of the federal stimulus package, which allocated \$425 million for mental health services and an additional \$1.32 billion for community mental health centers, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights International announced that they will be increasing oversight of the mental health industry. [1]

Following the lead of CCHR International, the Florida chapter of CCHR is also increasing its oversight due to concerns that there will be an increase in [telepsychiatry](#) and a potential for greater abuse and fraud across the state.

“

Florida is the number two state in the country for Medicaid fraud recoveries and a 'hotspot for health care fraud.'"

South Florida Business Journal

companies for their alleged participation in healthcare fraud schemes involving more than \$1.2 billion in losses". [3]

Then in September of 2019, the "Department of Justice announced the indictment of 35 people across the country on charges connected to allegedly fraudulently billing Medicare for more than \$2.1 billion in what the department called the "largest healthcare fraud schemes ever charged." According to Medical Economics, at its core, the scheme, involved "illegal bribes and kickbacks to medical professionals working with fraudulent telemedicine companies in exchange for referrals of Medicare beneficiaries." [4]

As reported the South Florida Business Journal, Florida is the number two state in the country



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The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida announced that they are "launching a task force with state and local officials to investigate fraud related to the coronavirus."

"Within days of the passage of the stimulus package a Tampa psychiatric practice sent out a press release that they are now offering 'drive-in' telepsychiatry," said the president of [CCHR Florida](#) Diane Stein. "CCHR is very concerned that in an effort to provide help during the COVID-19 crisis that instead of providing help the door to rampant fraud may have been opened." [2]

In May of 2019, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Inspector General 'announced charges against 24 defendants associated with five telemedicine

for Medicaid fraud recoveries and a “hotspot for health care fraud.” [5]

CCHR is not the only organization that is concerned with the potential for fraud in Florida as a result of the passage of the federal stimulus package. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Florida announced today that they are “launching a task force with state and local officials to investigate fraud related to the coronavirus.” [6]

“At this time, it is more important than ever to ensure that people receive real help and do not become the victims of fraud and abuse,” said Stein. “CCHR is working remotely but more diligently than ever to ensure that if people need to report abuse, we are there for them.”

CCHR operates a hotline free of charge where people who have been the victim of psychiatric abuse or fraud can make an official report by calling 800-782-2878 or online at [Report Psychiatric Abuse or Fraud](#).

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR’s mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: “Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the ‘free world’ tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of ‘mental health,’” he wrote in March 1969. For more information please visit www.cchrflorida.org.

[1] Mental Health Watchdog Keeps Service Open for Consumers to Report Abuse & Fraud
https://www.cchr.org/2020/03/31/mental-health-watchdog-keeps-service-open-for-consumers-to-report-abuse-fraud/?fbclid=IwAR1DHx97_DvkFIK46feWSzVOzbesy3C_EMKU1BP-Pa0JU8GFA6J_UA_8fMc

[2] prnewswire.com/news-releases/health-and-psychiatry-launches-first-ever-drive-in-mental-health-clinic-301031663.html

[3] Telehealth: Two Steps Forward For Payment, Three Steps Back For Fraud?
<https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/telehealth-two-steps-forward-for-22452/>



The Citizens Commission on Human Rights is a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the eradication of abuses committed under the guise of mental health.



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.

[4] Medicare fraud: Feds indict 35 in alleged \$2.1 billion fraud scheme involving telemedicine

<https://www.medicaleconomics.com/news/medicare-fraud-feds-indict-35-alleged-21-billion-fraud-scheme-involving-telemedicine>

[5] Medicaid fraud recoveries top \$165M in Florida

<https://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2017/03/08/medicaid-fraud-recoveries-top-165m-in-florida.html>

[6] U.S. Attorney in Tampa launches coronavirus fraud task force

Investigators will target fake cures, fake charities, cyber-extortion and scams targeting people's stimulus payments.

<https://www.tampabay.com/news/business/2020/03/31/us-attorney-in-tampa-launches-coronavirus-fraud-task-force/>

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CCHR: Healthcare Fraud Quiz



Question: Who commits more healthcare fraud and abuse? A. Hospital administrators? B. Medical doctors? C. Psychiatrists? Answer: Psychiatrists commit 40% of all Healthcare fraud.



With \$1.7 billion allocated to mental health programs in response to COVID-19 fears and concerns, CCHR anticipates increase in telepsychiatry fraud and abuse.

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

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