

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Notes: Feds Charge 243 People in Medicare Strike Force Takedown

Government officials were quite busy last week, crossing the country to charge 243 different people with Medicare fraud totaling \$712 million in false billings.

The charges, which were brought against a variety of defendants, including 46 doctors, nurses and other practitioners, came to fruition on June 18, the Justice Department announced in a news release. The event was a record for the government, resulting in the biggest Medicare Strike Force takedown in history.

The charges range from conspiracy to commit health care fraud, anti-kickback violations, identity theft, and more. "The defendants charged include doctors, patient recruiters, home health care providers, pharmacy owners, and others," said Attorney General **Loretta E. Lynch** in a statement. "They billed for equipment that wasn't provided, for care that wasn't needed, and for services that weren't rendered. In the days ahead, the Department of Justice will continue our focus on preventing wrongdoing and prosecuting those whose criminal activity drives up medical costs and jeopardizes a system that our citizens trust with their lives."

Resource: To read more on the case, including examples of practitioners that were charged with crimes, visit www.justice.gov/opa/pr/national-medicare-fraud-takedown-results-charges-against-243-individuals-approximately-712.