

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Hospice News: Hospice Fraud Case Stokes Public's Fear Of End Of Life Service

The **FBI** investigation of a hospice owner is dealing a blow to the public's trust in the service.

**Brad Harris**, owner of **Novus Health Care Services Inc.** in Frisco, Texas, allegedly directed nurses to give hospice patients overdoses of drugs such as morphine to speed up their deaths and maximize profits under the aggregate cap, an **FBI** agent wrote in an affidavit for a search warrant executed in February, according to NBC 5 News in Dallas. Harris, an accountant, instructed a nurse to administer overdoses to three patients and directed another employee to increase a patient's medication to four times the maximum allowed, the FBI said. He allegedly sent text messages like, "You need to make this patient go bye-bye."

The FBI discovered these allegations in an investigation initially sparked by more routine hospice fraud charges of admitting ineligible patients, swapping patients back and forth between hospice and home health divisions for financial purposes, and so forth.

"The healthcare industry is commonly criticized for the activities of a few," notes **The Health Group** in its email newsletter. "Unfortunately, any bad publicity is remembered much longer than good publicity," laments the Morgantown, W. Va. consulting firm.