



Feb. 9, 2015

Contact: Karen Smigielski
Communications
651-431-2190
Karen.Smigielski@state.mn.us

State looks for new ways to prevent home care fraud

Efforts aim to help DHS ensure PCA services are paid for properly

The Department of Human Services is reaching out to learn more about private services and products that monitor personal care assistants and that help prevent fraud. DHS has issued a request for information that could lead to another tool in regulating this growing area.

Personal care assistance is a service for people receiving Medicaid, who need help with day-to-day activities so they can be more independent in their home and community. Paying providers in this highly decentralized model presents regulatory challenges. While DHS is responsible for investigating fraudulent activity in all 80 types of Medicaid service providers, a disproportionate share of its work relates to PCA services. In 2014, the PCA program represented 7 percent of reimbursed services, yet accounted for 43 percent of the investigative work.

[The request on the department's website](#) asks providers of these services to send the Office of the Inspector General information about how their products or services can verify that a personal care assistant or PCA is appropriately delivering care to eligible clients. They are asked to identify how their service or product works and how it verifies a PCA's identity, presence, and services provided in a client's home. The department also is interested in knowing the length of time PCAs spend with their clients.

“DHS is committed to protecting taxpayers from fraud in public programs,” said Inspector General Jerry Kerber, whose office oversees fraud prevention and detection efforts. “While we aggressively pursue overpayments and fraud prevention, this request is part of an ongoing effort to continue to improve efforts to combat fraud.”

The department investigates all reports alleging false billing and in 75 percent of these cases, overpayments are discovered. In every overpayment case, DHS pursues full recovery of the public funds. In the past two years, 72 cases have been referred for criminal prosecution.

Respondents to the request for information should assume that clients and PCAs do not have smartphones, tablets, computers, HDTVs, other similar devices, or Internet access. The deadline for submitting questions is Feb. 13; the submission deadline is March 2.