



What is Fraud, Abuse and Waste?

OHSU is responsible for the money and other resources it receives from the government for patient care, research and education. For these reasons, we must comply with all laws and regulations that are designed to prevent and detect fraud, abuse and waste in government programs.

Fraud

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) defines fraud as “Knowingly submitting, or causing to be submitted, false claims or making misrepresentations of fact to obtain a Federal health care payment for which no entitlement would otherwise exist.” Fraud is an intentional misrepresentation.

Examples of fraud include:

- Knowingly billing for services at a level of complexity higher than services actually provided or documented in the medical records
- Knowingly billing for services not furnished, supplies not provided, or both, including falsifying records to show delivery of such items
- Knowingly ordering medically unnecessary items or services for patients
- Submitting a false claim for reimbursement. False claims describe any attempt to submit inaccurate information for financial reimbursement

Abuse

CMS defines abuse as “practices that may directly or indirectly result in unnecessary costs to the Medicare Program. Abuse includes any practice that does not provide patients with medically necessary services or meet professionally recognized standards of care.” Abuse is bending the rules.

Examples of abuse include:

- Billing for unnecessary medical services
- Charging excessively for services or supplies
- Misusing codes on a claim, such as upcoding or unbundling codes

Waste

Waste results from inefficiencies that result in the overutilization of services or unnecessary costs.

Example of Waste:

- Ordering excessive diagnostic tests

Where to Obtain More Information on Fraud and Abuse

For more detailed information about fraud and abuse, please refer to the CMS booklet [MEDICARE FRAUD & ABUSE: PREVENT, DETECT, REPORT](#).

If you have a question about fraud, abuse or waste, please contact the Clinical Enterprise Integrity Office at 503-494-2133 or at hcintegrity@ohsu.edu.