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- ◆ The HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) has proposed a rule on civil monetary penalties (CMPs) for information blocking and fraud related to HHS grants, contracts and other agreements.^[1] OIG also proposed to adjust the maximum penalties for various CMP violations.
- ◆ HHS's Health Resources and Services Administration has a new website for telehealth. Visit <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/>.
- ◆ In an audit of 100 psychotherapy services billed to Medicare in 2017 and 2018, OIG said Grand Desert Psychiatric Services in Las Vegas, Nevada, only billed one of them correctly.^[2] As a result, Grand Desert was overpaid \$5,173, which OIG extrapolated to \$421,272. OIG contended that Grand Desert didn't document the time spent on psychotherapy, the services didn't comply with incident-to billing requirements or psychotherapy wasn't provided as documented.
- ◆ Orthopedic surgeon Jeffrey R. Carlson has agreed to pay \$1.75 million to settle a false claims case over allegations he accepted kickbacks from SpineFrontier Inc., a Massachusetts-based medical device manufacturer, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts said April 24.^[3] Carlson is the sixth surgeon to settle a case in connection with SpineFrontier. The U.S. attorney's office filed a False Claims Act complaint in March against SpineFrontier and its executives, alleging the company paid kickbacks to spine surgeons directly and through a sham third party, Impartial Medical Experts LLC, which was owned by SpineFrontier's founder and CEO, Kingsley R. Chin.

¹ Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements: Fraud and Abuse; Information Blocking; Office of Inspector General's Civil Money Penalty Rules, 85 Fed. Reg. 22,979 (April 24, 2020) , <https://go.usa.gov/xvR58>.

² OIG, "Grand Desert Psychiatric Services: Audit of Medicare Payments for Psychotherapy Services," HHS, April 2020, <https://go.usa.gov/xvRzb>.

³ Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts, "Surgeon Agrees to Pay \$1.75 Million to Resolve Allegations that He Accepted Kickbacks from SpineFrontier," news release, April 24, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3bBxkXO>.

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