

News from the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
Protecting, Advocating and Ensuring Quality of Life for People with Disabilities

Roger Bearden, Chair

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Joint CQC / OMIG Investigation Finds Medicaid-Funded Employee Not on the Job
Probe Recovers \$100,000 in Misspent Medicaid Money

A joint investigation by the Commission on Quality of Care (CQC) and the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) has resulted in the recovery of \$100,109 in Medicaid funds that were paid to an employee of the Cerebral Palsy Association of the North Country in Canton, New York who was actually working at a nearby sporting goods store.

Following a complaint to the Commission, CQC investigators found that the employee, Norman Wayte, a Medicaid service coordinator, had filed time sheets and travel records from 2006 through 2010 claiming that he had been meeting with clients of Cerebral Palsy Association of the North Country. However, a check of employment records at a sporting goods store in nearby Watertown showed that he had actually been working there instead. The CQC probe found that over the four year period Wayte's salary of more than \$100,000 was billed to Medicaid.

"This is not just a theft of money from Medicaid, but a theft of services from people who are among the most vulnerable among us," said CQC Chair Roger Bearden. "Abuse of people with disabilities will not be tolerated, whether that abuse is physical or financial."

"Wayte's deliberate actions placed Medicaid enrollees and taxpayers at risk and that's unacceptable," said Acting Medicaid Inspector General James C. Cox. "OMIG is pleased with the results of this investigation, undertaken in cooperation with CQC. Wayte's aberrant behavior on the part of a trusted employee is never acceptable, and we are confident that the Cerebral Palsy Association of the North Country handled both the financial and administrative processes of this case in an appropriate manner."

Cerebral Palsy Association of the North Country agreed with the findings of the joint investigation by CQC and OMIG and has reimbursed the Medicaid funds that were used to pay Wayte. Wayte, who worked out of the Association's Watertown office, has since been terminated and the case has been referred to the Jefferson County District Attorney's office for further action.

Medicaid service coordinators are responsible for assisting people with disabilities who need services and programs, including modifications to living facilities and help in transitioning into the local community from institutional care.

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