28 November 2023

One person has been charged and another questioned following a Fraud Fusion Taskforce (FFT or Taskforce) investigation into alleged fraud against the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS or Scheme).

The Taskforce, co-led by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA or Agency), acted alongside partner agencies including the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

On Monday 27 November, the Taskforce executed a warrant at a Sydney premises, with two individuals, who had been acting as NDIS providers, questioned and one later charged.

Both individuals have also been barred from delivering supports to NDIS participants, with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission issuing banning orders against the pair and two associated provider companies.

This week's activity was the result of a coordinated response by the NDIA and partner FFT agencies to respond to alleged fraudulent behaviour.

Participant welfare has been our absolute priority. We are actively working with participants and their nominees to protect their plans. We are also actively monitoring related participant plans and account transactions for any unusual or suspicious activity.

The NDIA has worked to identify any affected participants impacted by this activity to ensure they continue to receive their NDIS supports. This has included supporting some participants to find alternative providers to deliver their services.

The NDIA has a zero tolerance to fraud and continues working to detect and prevent fraud against the NDIS – and to ensure every dollar allocated to our participants reaches them.

NDIA staff member arrested and charged

This week's activity follows an NDIA staff member being arrested and charged after a FFT investigation revealed a data breach of NDIA information, involving the alleged unauthorised disclosure of information to a third party.

As part of an ongoing investigation into a disability service provider, FFT members detected information they suspected may have originated from internal NDIA systems.

As a result, the NDIA in early November launched a concurrent investigation into the suspected data breach.

While the NDIA's investigation is continuing, it is currently believed that the information disclosed came from the Agency's internal systems.

On November 9, the Taskforce executed warrants at a Sydney residence, with an NDIA staff member arrested and charged with offences related to the alleged unauthorised disclosure of protected Agency information.

The NDIA also took immediate action to protect participants while continuing to analyse the data and working to identify impacted individuals.

This included actively monitoring NDIS plans and account transactions for any unusual or suspicious activity.

In instances where it was identified a participant may be at greater risk due to the level of personal information disclosed, the NDIA has contacted the participant (or their support network) to ensure their welfare and that they continue to receive their disability-related supports.

While the Agency believes this incident is financially motivated, the priority remains the safety and welfare of our participants.

There is also no evidence at this time to suggest that personal information has been distributed beyond the network subject of these investigations.

The NDIA continues to actively monitor the situation and continues working to ensure any individual suspected of engaging in activity that has the potential to put our participants and their NDIS funding at risk is brought to justice.

As these matters are ongoing, the NDIA is unable to provide further comment at this time.

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