NDIA and Fraud Fusion Taskforce intensifies investigations to catch crooks

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A recent series of early morning raids, payment locks and increased prosecutions on suspected fraudulent and criminal National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers is showing Labor's crackdown on frauds and rorts is having big results.

In the past few weeks alone, three warrants have been executed by the National Disability Insurance Agency-led Fraud Fusion Taskforce, with hundreds more prosecutions expected to result from other ongoing investigations.

Almost 1,000 disability service providers have had payment locks applied to their claims within the last few months as the NDIA and Fraud Fusion Taskforce continue to target dodgy providers.

Minister for the NDIS the Hon. Bill Shorten MP said the high tempo of operations, investigations, raids and prosecutions is showing the work and investment commenced in mid-2022 is bearing fruit.

"The focus on cracking down on fraud and rorts is having a dramatic result and will only continue as the NDIA and the Fraud Fusion Taskforce continue their intensified efforts," Minister Shorten said.

"The NDIA continues to significantly improve its ability to detect and prevent fraud against participants and the Scheme. It is astonishing that many providers think they can lodge claims containing hundreds of thousands of dollars in incorrect or duplicate or fraudulent claiming and then expect to just be automatically paid."

"Providers need to understand that they can't be 'half honest'. If the NDIA detects fraud, its first priority is ensuring participant safety and welfare – meaning the Agency will move participants to alternative providers.

"The Agency will also facilitate the exit of dodgy providers from the scheme. In fact, dozens of these providers are now being progressed towards criminal prosecutions."

The widespread clampdown on dodgy providers comes amid further FFT action on Tuesday, which saw the NDIA and other FFT partner agencies execute a search warrant at a South Australian premises.

That activity was part of an ongoing investigation into alleged Commonwealth criminal offences.

"This work by the Fraud Taskforce continues a concerted effort by this Government to rid the NDIS from the shonks and scammers who think they can rip off Australians living with disability," Minister Shorten said.

"The Fraud Taskforce is detecting and catching more crooks every day. Today was the third raid on a provider in recent weeks and comes as the Taskforce continues to grow – it is now up to 21 government agencies working together to stop fraud against the Scheme.

“I want to be really clear to everyone – whether you’re a registered or unregistered provider falsifying claims, or a dodgy health practitioner falsifying assessments, or a dodgy tax agent facilitating NDIS frauds, or a dodgy plan manager facilitating false claims or a sophisticated criminal group doing all of the above, you will be caught.”

The Taskforce’s continued expansion means the Commonwealth now has more avenues to detect and catch anyone looking to defraud Government systems.

“Through this Taskforce we now have agencies across the NDIS, across tax, across Medicare, working together and sharing information in a way that, up until a couple of years ago, they hadn’t previously,” Minister Shorten said.

“So it doesn’t matter whether you are using one ABN or 50 ABNs to try and hide your crimes. It doesn’t matter whether you move your money to off-shore accounts or into crypto-currency or between banks or whether you spend it on luxury assets or living the high life.

“If you are a provider and you try to defraud participants or the NDIS itself, the FFT will come for you. And when they come for you, they will look at you holistically. They will look at your claims, your registrations, your financial affairs and whatever other mischief you used to facilitate fraud against participants and the Commonwealth.

“For those dodgy providers out there still trying to defraud participants and the NDIS, I just have one question. It is you versus the 21 Commonwealth agencies in the Fraud Fusion Taskforce, so ‘Do you really want to pick that fight?’

“We know there are many great providers.”

For those providers that remain committed to ensuring the integrity of the NDIS, if you do have any concerns about the practices of any other NDIS providers (including Plan Managers, health professionals or Support Coordinators) or participants, we strongly encourage you to report suspicious behaviour through the NDIA Fraud Reporting Form .

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