

CBS Mornings

04/07/26

7:00:55 a.m. [TEASE]

9 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Hospice Fraud Investigation]

NORAH O'DONNELL: A CBS News investigation into hospice fraud uncovers possible red flags involving a doctor in California.

ADAM YAMAGUCHI [TO BHUVA]: Sir, we can – we were able to hear you through the door.

(...)

7:20:32 a.m. [TEASE]

9 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Ahead; Hospice Fraud Investigation]

VLADIMIR DUTHIERS: Ahead, a CBS News investigation into possible red flags in the hospice industry. Adam Yamaguchi tries to speak with a doctor who has submitted thousands of claims.

(...)

7:32:41 a.m.

4 minutes and 12 seconds

O'DONNELL: Now to the ongoing CBS News Investigation into fraud in the hospice industry. Our investigative unit found some potential red flags. One hospice doctor submitted claims for more than 20 times the number of patients the average California doctor cares for in a year. CBS News correspondent Adam Yamaguchi hit the road to follow the money.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: CBS News Investigations; Hospice Doctor's Medicare Claims Raise Red Flags]

YAMAGUCHI: The state of California says that if a doctor is involved with any more than, like, even just a few hospices, it is a sign of potential fraud. At the heart of the industry are doctors who are trusted to sign off on care, but in records for the active physicians caring for terminal patients one stands out, a man whose name appeared on claims from 126 hospices and had 60 percent more in Medicare reimbursements than the next closest doctor in 2024 – the last full year of available data – Dr. Rajiv Bhuvra. [TO HOSPICE STAFF] My name is Adam Yamaguchi. I'm a correspondent with CBS News, and we're doing a story about hospice, and we're just trying to understand how often he is here.

MAN: I didn't [sic] see him in a long time.

YAMAGUCHI: In a long time? Neither had any of the hospices we visited. We wanted to find Dr. Bhuvu to ask how he managed to work for so many different providers, so we followed a trail of hospice offices linked to his name and Medicare claims totaling \$71 million in 2024 across the LA basin. [TO NURSE] We understand that Dr. Rajiv Bhuvu is the medical director here, and we're trying to get some information about him.

RECEPTIONIST [OFF-CAMERA]: He's not.

YAMAGUCHI [TO STAFF]: He's not?

RECEPTIONIST: No.

YAMAGUCHI [TO NURSE]: Was he at some point?

NURSE: Yes, he was.

YAMAGUCHI [TO STAFF]: But you're telling me he's longer associated with you guys?

NURSE: No, close the door.

YAMAGUCHI [TO STAFF]: Was he at some point?

NURSE: No, close the door, thank you.

RECEPTIONIST: Thank you.

YAMAGUCHI: On average in California, a hospice doctor claims for about 140 patients in a year. In 2024, claims with Bhuvu's name were submitted for nearly 2,800 terminally ill patients.

PENN STATE HERSHEY DR. KRISTINA NEWPORT: There's no reason to think it is legitimate.

YAMAGUCHI: Dr. Kristina Newport has been in the hospice field for 18 years. There are a range of reasons why one physician might be identified in connection with the care for so many patients, including stolen identity.

NEWPORT: If someone is really effectively evaluating the plan of care for every patient that they admit to the hospice, which is their job and their responsibility, they, you know, would have a superhuman schedule to do that in a meaningful way.

YAMAGUCHI: CBS News found Bhuvu's name tied to several hospices that lost their Medicare certification for what regulators called an abuse of billing, a pattern of submitting improper claims. We reached out to him on the phone and e-mail, but couldn't connect, so we headed to

Dr. Bhuva's home address. Dr. Bhuva came out. He said that being affiliated with dozens of hospices is not illegal. And I – and I said you're correct. There's nothing in the law that prevents someone from being affiliated with many, but, again, it raises flags, and that's what I have questions about. Bhuva said he wanted to see our information. Until then, he said he wouldn't talk any further, so we came back with the data. [TO BHUVA] Hi, Dr. Bhuva. This is Adam Yamaguchi again with CBS News. [SCREEN WIPE] We were able to hear you through the door. [TO CAMERA] He's made his decision not to talk. No, we tried multiple ways and times to get in touch with Dr. Bhuva. The first time we spoke to him without cameras, he asked us to come back without documents, and when we did, he wouldn't answer the door. We'd still would like to talk to him.

O'DONNELL: It's a really important investigation raising these questions about fraud.

YAMAGUCHI: Absolutely. One of the things that's so shocking about all of this is that it appears to be hiding in plain sight.

O'DONNELL: Uh-huh.

YAMAGUCHI: When you look at those numbers, the 126 hospices and nearly 2,800 patients in one year, we're the only ones asking these questions.

GAYLE KING: Something tells me, Adam, more people will be asking questions after that story today. I love how you went back and said, we're here with the data, and we can hear you inside your house. Let's see if he gets in touch with you.

O'DONNELL: And I think the question that many people have is, why is my health care so expensive? And is it because of fraud that exists –

NATE BURLESON: No doubt.

O'DONNELL: – out there?

YAMAGUCHI: Absolutely. Ultimately, we, the taxpayers, end up paying.

BURELSON: Mmm.

KING: Well, alright, Adam –

BURLESON: Adam, thank you.

KING: – thank you so much.