

## **MEDIC Investigator Stivers Receives Prestigious OIG Award**

The Atlanta Regional Office of the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations (OIG) recently recognized National Benefit Integrity MEDIC Investigator Bill Stivers for his work in the area of drug diversion.

In presenting him with the Inspector General's Integrity Award (the highest award OIG gives to non-OIG personnel), Special Agent In Charge Derrick Jackson spoke of Bill's dedication, diligence, responsive attitude, and invaluable service to the OIG mission. In particular, Jackson cited his assistance in providing information that led to excluding fraudulent providers from the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Please join us in congratulating Bill!



Bill Stivers (right) receives award from OIG's Derrick Jackson.

## **New Innovation Team Formed**

In March, the Black Innovation Team joined MEDIC's Red, White, and Blue Innovation Team family. Led by Kevin Barnard, the new team includes investigators Christina Nguyen, Penny Prochazka, Ken Smith, Julia Thornton, investigative analyst Mekel DeGroff, analyst Pu Chen, and a pharmacist.

MEDIC's Innovation Teams are multi-disciplinary groups of investigators, analysts, nurses, investigative analysts, pharmacy techs, and pharmacists. They serve as a resource to the proactive analysis process and the expansion of national case exposures. The teams tackle complex investigative projects such as repackager exposure, payment of claims for deceased providers, false front pharmacies, and California prescription fraud schemes.

In May, Team leads Rich Ptachinski (Red), Don DeGroff (White), Cortney Devine (Blue), and Kevin Bernard (Black) will begin monthly conference calls to coordinate efforts, prevent duplicative work, and document milestone achievements.

## ***“Miles-Too-Great” Analysis***

Why would someone travel more than 50 miles to visit a pharmacy to fill a prescription?

That was a question posed to the NBI MEDIC’s data team. With today’s abundance of pharmacies, it seemed unlikely that many people would need to travel that far to fill their needs.

In their analysis, the data team took it one step farther. Making the assumption that some people may live that far away, the team’s analysis identified retail pharmacies with more than 50 percent of their beneficiaries traveling over 50 miles for a prescription. The team then selected two of those identified for further investigation.

In both cases, the pharmacies did not even exist. One had never existed and the other had been closed for over six months. Based on this analysis and on additional investigative work, law enforcement has accepted both cases for Federal investigations.

After this promising success, the NBI MEDIC has expanded the analysis and is currently looking at pharmacies in other parts of the country fitting the same pattern.

## ***New Offices Open***

In the past two months, the NBI MEDIC has opened two new offices in the Northeast.

Our office in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, located just north of Philadelphia, offers the team easy access to most of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York City. It is staffed by Deputy BI Manager Steve Lang, three investigators, and an investigative analyst.

Our Newton, Massachusetts office just outside of Boston, staffed by three investigators and an investigative analyst, will focus on Part C and D fraud throughout New England.

In addition to these new office locations, the NBI MEDIC has added home-based investigators in Northern New Jersey, Detroit, Chicago, Southern California, Seattle, and Texas.

*NBInews is published twice a month by Health Integrity, LLC*

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