

# Whistle blower articles

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Halifax Hospital Whistleblower Case Introduction The whistleblower lawsuit against the Halifax Hospital Medical Centre is undeniably the largest whistleblower cases in the history of USA with estimated damages of 200 million shillings accrued over decades (Orlando Sentinel, 2013). The Daytona Beach Hospital became the embarrassment of the medical society by being accused of allegations such as billing fraud, unnecessary hospital admission, illegal kickbacks to doctors and inappropriate spinal surgery. The fact that most of the hospital bills defrauded government funded programs such as Medicaid and Medicare aggravated the uproar from the government and the general public (Orlando Sentinel, 2014).

The case had sparked enormous doubt among the public towards hospitals and the credibility of medical practitioners. The case was an eye-opener to the extent of extortion occurring at local hospitals and the perennial risk incurred by patients undergoing unnecessary surgeries and admission.

According to Elin Baklid-Kunz, the hospital allegedly admitted thousands of patients unnecessarily between year 2000 and 2011. Her position as director of physical services enabled her to expose the compensation agreements to doctors that violated kickback laws. Additionally, 90% of all the spinal fusion procedures conducted were unnecessary, hence the doctors did not value the patients' safety (Orlando Sentinel, 2013).

On a positive note, the large remuneration of Baklid-Kunz and also the whistleblower protection laws encourages more whistle-blowers to come out and reduce fraudulent activities in organizations both government and private. According to (Turner, 2014) whistle-blowing protection laws such as the whistle-blowing protection Act and the Ethics in Government Act guarantee the freedom of speech for workers. An piece by R. Robin <https://assignbuster.com/whistle-blower-articles/>

McDonald, on the month of March 12, 2014, the lead attorney Marlan Wilbanks indicates that whistleblowers can claim for over 25% of what the government receives as compensation. However, the majority of whistleblowers receives over 16.5% of the compensation.

Baklid-Kunz won 20 million dollars that were 25% of the government compensation. She received her share under the provisions of the Federal False claim Act. The Act encourages private citizens to bring information in the structure of a civil action aligned with the company suspected of fraud. The attorneys went on and litigated against Halifax on the allegations that the hospital unlawfully boosted their revenue at the expense of the Medicare program by admitting patients unnecessarily for short stays. The attorneys sought compensation between 80 to 240 million dollars. However, the judge of the case established that they failed to provide evidence showing Halifax Health provided unnecessary medical services (Orlando Sentinel, 2014). As a result, Halifax Health settled for 5.5 million dollars for the second lawsuit to the disappointment of the attorneys. However, the judge ruled that the settlement required the corporate integrity agreement. This agreement would allow federal government officials to oversee the hospital billing practices over five years (Turner, 2014).

Ironically, Baklid-Kunz still works for the hospital despite the lawsuit. Although she delayed “spilling the beans” out of fear of losing her job, it is encouraging to note she was not victimized. However, the public should not just focus on her compensation and also consider the high cost of speaking the truth. Whistle-blowers generally suffer isolation, ridicule and retaliation for long periods of time. According to Turner (2014), Baklid-Kunz suffered this stigmatization for five years from Halifax executives and employees. A <https://assignbuster.com/whistle-blower-articles/>

major disappointment for whistle-blowers is their reduced employment chances if they leave the company. This might explain why Baklid-Kunz would remain in the hospital.

In conclusion, the lawsuit against the Halifax Hospital Medical Centre has provided the necessary incentive for efficient and credible medical services offered by the hospital. Also, the laws aimed at protecting whistle-blowers encourage more workers to expose injustices against people and fraudulent activities as a whole.

#### References

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