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PRESS RELEASE

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President and Vice President of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Programs Plead Guilty to Medicaid Fraud

BALTIMORE, MD (June 15, 2021) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that Tasha S. Saunders, 42, of Parkville, and Diane S. Jordan, 48, also of Parkville, each pleaded guilty to one count of felony Medicaid Fraud for submitting claims that caused the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) to reimburse their companies, Changing Directions, Inc. and HEAL Inc., more than \$470,000 for services that were not provided using the stolen identities of Medicaid providers and recipients.

Anne Arundel Circuit Court Judge Pamela K. Alban sentenced Saunders to five years of incarceration, all but 9 months of jail suspended and 9 months of home detention. Judge Alban also ordered three years of supervised probation and restitution to Medicaid in the amount of \$470,744.67. Anne Arundel Circuit Court Judge Alison Asti sentenced Jordan to five years of incarceration, all suspended but one year of home detention. Judge Asti placed Jordan on three years of supervised probation and ordered Jordan to pay restitution to Medicaid in the amount of \$470,744.67.

Saunders was the founder and president of a mental health and substance abuse treatment program operating in Baltimore City. Jordan was the vice president of the companies. From as early as July 2016 until May 2019, Saunders and Jordan submitted at least 3,909 claims for reimbursement. In fact, many of the Medicaid recipients whose information was used for billing were not clients of the programs and never received services. In addition, Saunders and Jordan used the stolen identities of licensed counselors for billing claims and creating fictitious patient files to support the fraudulent billing.

“These defendants ran a scheme to steal hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Maryland Medicaid program,” said Attorney General Frosh. “I am pleased that our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit was able to shut it down and return the stolen funds back to the State.”

Attorney General Frosh thanked the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for its work on the case, specifically Assistant Attorney General James McHale, Senior Investigator Mark Holback, and Investigator Alice Halle. Attorney General Frosh also thanked the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Inspector General for its assistance.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2021/061521.pdf>