



ANTHONY G. BROWN, MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Speech and Occupational Therapy Practice Pleads Guilty to Nearly \$400K Fraud Scheme in Anne Arundel County

**BALTIMORE, MD (April 21, 2023)** – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced that Wellspring Therapy Services, LLC (Wellspring), a speech and occupational therapy practice in Anne Arundel County, pleaded guilty to felony Medicaid fraud in Baltimore City Circuit Court. The Honorable Judge Fletcher-Hill ordered Wellspring to pay \$399,228.62 in restitution to the State. In addition, the company must terminate its participation in the Medicaid program and its owner, Thembi DePass, must also terminate her participation in the Medicaid program for 3 years.

Wellspring marketed itself as Wellspring Preschool, a therapy practice that provided speech and occupational therapy to preschool-aged children. Wellspring Preschool has never been licensed by the State of Maryland as a preschool or daycare. As part of its scheme, Wellspring knowingly and willfully submitted claims to Medicaid for services that it knew to be fraudulent. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, Wellspring continued to bill from March 16, 2020, to March 27, 2020, despite not providing any services. Additionally, a review of Wellspring’s records revealed that 22 children were assessed in January 2020 as “within normal limits” with respect to their speech development. However, Wellspring continued to bill Medicaid for speech-language therapy services for those children well beyond that date.

In making today’s announcement, Attorney General Brown thanked the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, former Assistant Attorney General Tracee Orlove Fruman, Investigator Michael Glenn, and Investigator Paul Kidd for their work on this case. As well as Deputy Director Lisa Marts and Assistant Attorney General Gregory Jennings for their assistance.

The Maryland Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit receives 75 percent of its funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under a grant award totaling \$4,908,456 for Federal fiscal year (FY) 2023. The remaining 25 percent, totaling \$1,636,148 for FY 2023, is funded by the state of Maryland.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/042123.pdf>