



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Delaware Nurses Association Statement on Fraudulent Nursing Degree Schemes

NEWARK, DE – January 26, 2023 – The Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney’s Office of Southern District of Florida announced yesterday, that [25 defendants were charged in a scheme to sell and obtain fraudulent nursing degrees for the purpose of obtaining a license and practicing as a nurse](#). Furthermore, as Delaware has been named in filings, we suspect that numerous of these potential licensees are affiliated with Delaware, and defendants may have obtained a license and/or have been potentially practicing in Delaware.

Public meeting records from the Delaware Division of Professional Regulation identify that, in a closed session of the Delaware Board of Nursing in November 2022, 26 licensees were sent annulment letters.

Philadelphia news station 6abc/WPVI is reporting that a Delaware-based company, Nursing Education Resource Center LLC., [employed one of the defendants charged in this case](#).

Delaware Nurses Association (DNA) President Stephanie McClellan, MBA, MSN, RN, CMSRN, NE-BC, stated, “We are deeply unsettled by this egregious act. We want all Delaware nurses to be aware of this active issue and to speak up if there is a concern regarding capacity to practice safely by a colleague/peer. This act is not a representation of our code of ethics and standards of practice nor our commitment to patients and our community.”

Special Agent, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, [Omar Pérez Aybar stated in a press conference](#), “To date, we have not learned of, nor uncovered, any evidence of patient harm stemming from these individuals potentially providing services to patients.”

For over two decades, [the public has rated the honesty and ethical standards of nurses as the highest among all evaluated professionals](#), including medical doctors, pharmacists, teachers, police officers, judges and more.

DNA’s Executive Director, Christopher E. Otto, MSN, RN, PCCN, CCRN, stated, “This unparalleled act of fraud and deceit does not reflect the integrity of our profession. The public should be reassured that longstanding safeguards alerted regulators to these cases, and resultant actions have already been completed. It is this safety infrastructure embedded within our profession that protects the public, and maintains the high integrity standards of nursing. Increased awareness and continued action are key to the ongoing mitigation of these cases.

Nurse regulators, educators and leaders across the nation and in Delaware have and continue to respond to these ongoing cases promptly and thoroughly. DNA commends the Delaware Board of Nursing and others for their prompt and swift actions to continue protecting our communities.”

Delaware nurses are encouraged to contact the Delaware Board of Nursing, 302-744-4500 or customerservice.dpr@delaware.gov, with any concerns about a colleague’s ability to practice safely and competently. Through both state regulations and professional code of ethics, nurses are obligated to protect patients when practice appears to be impaired.

ABOUT THE DELAWARE NURSES ASSOCIATION

Found in 1911, DNA is the premier leading professional association bringing together, and advancing the profession of nursing for over 100 years, creating healthier communities for all Delawareans. We are the only professional association in Delaware representing all Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses. We continue to advance health through the art and science of nursing supported by diverse members, advocacy, influence, professional development, generation of new knowledge, communication, service, and history.

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