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However, the methods and means of attack from fraudsters are constantly changing and I am determined that we not only keep pace but anticipate their actions. No level of fraud is acceptable, and DHSC and its partners will do even more in response to this threat, with an ambitious new 3-year strategy target of £500 million.

NHSCFA estimates that the NHS in England is vulnerable to £1.198 billion of fraud each year. This DHSC counter-fraud strategy is a key element in the government's response. It provides a co-ordinated activity programme, which aims to tackle the underlying factors that allow fraud to be committed by:

- improving the building and sharing of counter-fraud knowledge
- tackling the most harmful threats
- disrupting and punishing fraudsters
- enhancing our long-term capability to prevent fraud

To do this, we must improve the use of data and artificial intelligence in the fight against fraud – and we will therefore significantly increase investment in our data analytics capabilities over the next 3 years.

We will protect valuable taxpayers' money at every opportunity. This will ensure greater confidence in not only the NHS, but also the wider services government provides. Such confidence is essential for investment, spending and prosperity in our communities across England.

I am committed to strong governance at the heart of all spending with fraud prevention and detection being understood and prioritised from beginning to end. Only by doing that can we protect the NHS now and for future generations to come.

I commend this strategy to you as a much-needed development in the fight against fraud that builds on the government's existing successes in this area. Together we can reduce the harm fraud causes us all, and strengthen our communities and economy.

Lord Markham CBE

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care