

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Department of Defense (DoD), announced today that on October 26, 2001, the United States Department of Justice, Civil Litigation Branch, entered into a \$3.1 million civil settlement agreement with Lifeline Home Health Care, Incorporated (Lifeline), Fort Myers, FL. This settlement includes \$10,000 being recouped by TRICARE. Verification of the settlement finalization was not received from the United States Attorney's Office until November 1, 2001.

The investigation was based on a civil suit initially filed under seal in November 1998, wherein, the complainant alleged that the Lifeline, a healthcare provider to "homebound" patients, knowingly made false statements and false claims, for the purpose of defrauding the TRICARE and Medicare. The investigation was initiated under the qui tam provisions of the False Claims Act and included allegations of billing for services on patients who were not qualified to receive home health services, billing for services that were not medically necessary, and falsifying medical records.