

# The Wall Street Journal

## Universal Health Services to Pay \$122 Million to Settle Billing Investigations

**The company and related subsidiaries were accused of submitting false behavioral-health claims**



**Universal Health Services Inc. said the terms of the settlement announced by the U.S. Justice Department were consistent with a previously announced agreement in principle. The Justice Department building in Washington, D.C. is pictured above in February 2020.**

Photo: mary calvert/Reuters

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[Universal Health Services](#) Inc. and related entities agreed to pay \$122 million to settle investigations into billing practices at behavioral-health facilities and claims it paid illegal inducements to federal health care beneficiaries, the U.S. Justice Department said Friday.

King of Prussia, Pa.-based UHS and UHS of Delaware Inc. agreed to pay \$117 million to resolve allegations that UHS facilities knowingly submitted false claims for payment to Medicare, Medicaid, Tricare, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Federal Employee Health Benefit programs for inpatient behavioral health services, among other allegations, prosecutors said.

Turning Point Care Center, LLC, a UHS facility in Moultrie, Ga., agreed to pay \$5 million to resolve allegations that it provided free or discounted transportation services to induce Medicare and Medicaid patients to seek treatment at its facility, prosecutors said.

UHS denied the allegations, adding Friday that “the settlement does not constitute a finding of improper conduct or failure to provide appropriate care and treatment.” Prosecutors said there has been no determination of liability.

“UHS is pleased to have resolved this matter to avoid future distractions and the high costs of litigation, while ensuring that our focus remains steadfast on providing excellent care to our patients and their families,” the provider of hospital and health care services said. UHS also said the terms of the settlement were consistent with a previously announced [agreement in principle](#).

UHS came under scrutiny in 2016 after a report by BuzzFeed described company employees as having exaggerated people’s symptoms to admit psychiatric patients. UHS at the time [denied and disputed](#) the allegations.

The settlement followed investigations by the Justice Department, the Office of the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and various state attorneys general, the company said.

As part of the settlement, UHS entered into a corporate integrity agreement with the Office of the Inspector General that will remain in effect for five years, prosecutors said.

UHS must retain a government-selected independent monitor who will assess patient protections in the company’s behavioral health division and must undergo annual reviews of inpatient behavioral health claims to federal health care programs, prosecutors said.

“UHS already has a compliance program in existence which includes elements required by the [corporate integrity agreement],” UHS said. “The company’s existing compliance program makes it well positioned to comply with the obligations of the CIA going forward.”

UHS operates 26 acute-care hospitals, 331 behavioral-health facilities, 42 outpatient facilities and ambulatory care access points, and provides various other services.