

Increased employee fraud highlights need for robust background screening

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Leading global background screening provider, Sterling, urges businesses to take background screening more seriously in light of a slew of recent incidents in the healthcare sector where employees spent a number of years in situ after falsifying qualifications.

With a former NHS boss in Oxford receiving a suspended prison sentence after claiming a false university degree, and a senior radiologist lying about being a qualified GP – the company has highlighted the need for healthcare providers to have stronger screening processes, and stressed that these incidents can be better prevented with the right checks and balance.

However, this is not just limited to healthcare. According to a YouGov survey, 40% of respondents admitted to having lied about their education or qualifications. Meanwhile, research by HEDD (Higher Education Degree Datacheck) revealed that only 20% of employers perform proper checks on applicants' qualifications.

Commenting on the rise in figures, Steve Smith, Managing Director EMEA of Sterling stated:

“Unfortunately, this kind of fraud is not uncommon. With an explosion of ‘diploma mills’, where fake qualifications can be easily obtained – dishonesty is becoming easier than ever. As these methods become more sophisticated, the need for robust screening processes is crucial.”

“This is even more relevant in sectors like healthcare, where fraud could have a direct impact on the safety of members of the public. While in these recently identified cases, the perpetrators were caught – without reviewing vetting protocol, there remains a risk that others could fall through the net. Fortunately, with the right screening processes, these incidents would have been preventable. Education verification, among other, more common checks such as criminal record screening can shed light on candidates to ensure that businesses limit the risk of a bad hire.”

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