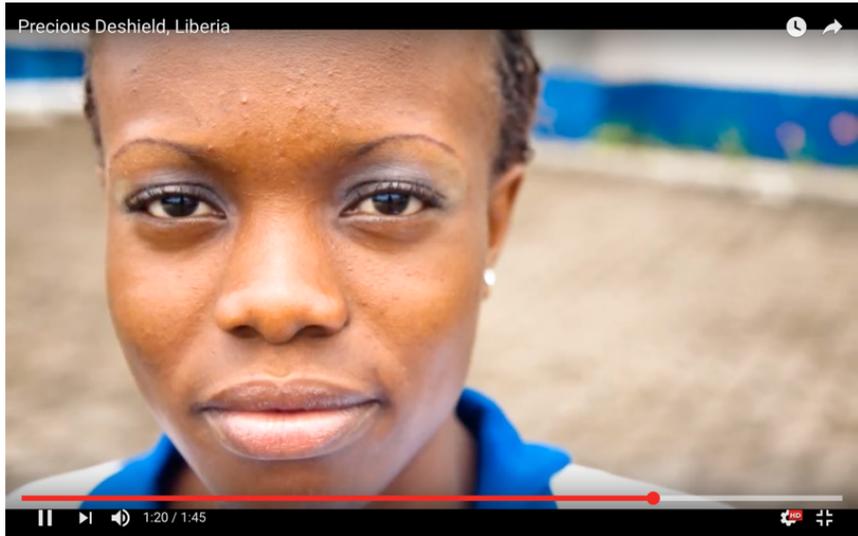


Flying Monkeys

Scott M. Peterson

THE NAME on her HIPAA [certification](#) is Precious Deshield. She was a registered nurse down in Houston, Texas y'all. That's what it says on her [indictment](#) too.



Precious Deshield

The one accusing her of defrauding Medicare. To the tune of — oh, say — \$8.4 million. Ms. Deshield worked at an outfit called Medpsych. Allegedly charging U.S. taxpayers for nurses that didn't exist. That indictment was filed on June 11, 2015.

DESHIELD worked at Medpsych as a Chief Nursing Officer. Putting herself in the driver's seat over who stayed — and who didn't. Deshield was completely above suspicion. Around 2010, full time nurses started getting replaced with registry nurses. Contractors that could be kept under the radar. Most of whom were never seen. But collected paychecks that somehow found their way into Deshield's bank account. By 2015, the only full time nurses left at Medpsych were those who kept their mouths shut.

THE Chief Nursing Officer at the Fort Bragg Hospital is Terry Ann Murphy. Who somehow manages to do very well here. On average, CNOs [earn](#) \$124,000 a year. But not Murph. According to Transparent California, she [made](#) \$165,637 here in 2015. Making hers the second biggest paycheck in Fort Bragg. And as such, puts her completely above suspicion. Just like Precious Deshield.

REGISTERED NURSES earn between \$45,000 and \$85,000. In 2015, eighty of them worked at the Fort Bragg Hospital. 27 RNs got less than \$45,000. 15 got more than \$85,000. Not including Terry Murphy. All from an organization still in bankruptcy. Which seems far from the teachings of Florence Nightingale — the founder of modern nursing. Who wrote something called the [Nightingale Pledge](#):

'I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly to pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully.

'I shall abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous, and shall not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.

'I shall do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling.

'I shall be loyal to my work and devoted towards the welfare of those committed to my care.'

MURPH keeps a sign on her desk. ‘I have flying monkeys... And I’m not afraid to use them.’ That pretty much says everything you need to know about Terry Ann Murphy. Back in 2013, she went on a firing spree. Getting rid of as many full time RNs as she could. Then replacing them with traveling nurses at double the cost. Just like Precious Deshield did. That was revealed in an Anderson Valley Advertiser [editorial](#) penned by one *very* pissed off coworker.

TRAVELING NURSES got pissed off too. That’s apparent in a Glassdoor [review](#) from July of 2014. Where one such contractor reported that Murph’s subordinates couldn’t merely *request* patient transfers via air ambulance. But had to *demand* them. Putting such RNs squarely in Murph’s sights. Not to mention her flying monkeys. Earning Murph a very special nickname — Jabba the Hutt.

LINKEDIN [shows](#) that Murph’s last gig was as a ‘Director’ at Seton Medical Center from April of 2010 to December of 2012. But that doesn’t jive with Seton’s [Form 990s](#) at the National Center for Charitable Statistics. Where Murphy’s name is nowhere to be found for that time period. But they showed the awesome power of her flying monkeys. In June of 2009, Seton’s net assets were at \$23,477,949. But by June of 2013, they were *minus* \$28,309,613. At this writing, Seton has yet to recover from a sea of red ink. With net assets at *negative* \$17,783,819. By then it was nearly over for Seton. So in December of 2015 it was [sold](#) along with five sister hospitals for \$100 million just to keep it out of bankruptcy. Nice job, Murph!

MURPH'S RESUME has a big fat hole in it. She reportedly graduated from Yuba College in 1982 with a degree in Registered Nursing. That checks out with State [records](#) showing when her RN license became active. Then she supposedly got a Masters Degree at University of San Francisco in 1989. But reports no employment for the twenty year period between then and when she worked for Seton. Which made me think twice about that Masters Degree claim. So for \$24.95, I decided to confirm that little detail. At www.studentclearinghouse.org. Then waited for the results.

PAYROLL FRAUD happens all the time — especially at hospitals. Like Grady Memorial, the largest hospital in Georgia. A fifty-five year old named Donald Thomas was the payroll manager there. At least until he got [caught](#) with his hand in the cookie jar. He did it by cutting checks to fired nurses. The checks weren't big — but there were a *lot* of them. 136 in all for a grand total of \$480,000. Averaging just a little over \$3,500 per fraud. It would have gone undetected until an astute nurse spotted it on their W-2 tax forms.

MURPH was probably hoping the Fort Bragg Hospital would fold. But it didn't. Nor did the substitution of visiting nurses for regular employees. Now that Hospital officials are thinking about closing obstetrics, she's in the spotlight. Blaming the RN shortage on a lack of affordable housing in Fort Bragg. Seriously.

MURPH'S PLATES didn't check out either. Within a couple of hours, I got an [email](#) from [Sally Trivero](#) at National Student

Clearinghouse. Who was unable to immediately verify Murphy's claim of a Masters Degree. But promised she'd contact San Francisco State University to follow up on my request. Nonetheless, I decided to archive a [copy](#) of Murph's online resume just in case she decided to send any flying monkeys my way. But in my line of work, it's always good to get it straight from the horse's mouth. So I dropped her an [email](#).

MURPH'S EMAIL is tmurphy@mcdh.org. I got that from MCDH administrative assistant Gayl Moon — somewhat inadvertently. I told Murph — straight up — what I'd found. Contrasting the claim on her resume with Sally Trivero's finding. That she *didn't* have a Masters Degree from San Francisco State University. Then asked for a comment. To see how she'd respond. With reason and respect — or with flying monkeys.

HOURS LATER, I hadn't heard anything back. So I sent Murph an [email](#) with a link to this article. Giving her an opportunity to correct anything I'd gotten wrong. That's the great thing about Google Drive. News needn't be delayed anymore. Today facts can be checked on the fly.

PRECIOUS DESHIELD didn't fare so well after that little old indictment. On September 12, 2016, she [surrendered](#) her license as a registered nurse. But she's still got her HIPAA [certification](#).

— END —

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