

Flood of federal insurance money leads to growing fraud among some DNA testing firms

Dr. Scott Wilson often participated in medical studies, so the one being proposed by the New Orleans laboratory Renaissance RX seemed reasonable.

An assistant would swab inside the cheeks of qualified patients and send the samples off to the company, which was doing research in the fast-growing arena of personalized genetic medicine.

But Wilson left the study last year, saying the company pressured doctors to enroll patients regardless of whether they were eligible. In a lawsuit, he also accused the company of improper billing. Renaissance denies the accusations.

The story of Renaissance offers a view inside the intoxicating brew of hype and hope in the field of genetic testing. All over the country, labs and research firms are popping up, eager to study strands of DNA to better identify who is at risk for developing a disease, to guide existing treatments and to develop new ones. But the troubles at Renaissance speak volumes about how difficult it is for [Medicare](#) and private insurers to keep up with the proliferation of tests being offered.

After receiving \$130 million in [Medicare](#) funds and \$55 million from a unit of the private investment giant TPG, Renaissance halted its study late last year after Medicare suspended payments and began reviewing the company's billing practices.

The Justice Department is also looking at whether the company's billing and payment practices violated federal laws. Renaissance officials say the federal government is unfairly targeting the company.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Pursuit of Cash Taints Promise of Gene Tests](#)