

2025 National healthcare fraud takedown cases filed in federal court in Texas, U.S. Department of Justice Criminal Division

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

Demitrious Gilmore, 46, of Lubbock, Texas, was charged by indictment with conspiracy to commit health care fraud in connection with the submission of false and fraudulent medical claims for various benefits, items, and services that were ineligible for reimbursement, not medically necessary, not performed, or not provided. As alleged in the indictment, Gilmore, the owner of WM Wellness, LLC and Gilmorehands, Inc. d/b/a Work-Med, submitted the claims to the Department of Labor Office of Workers Compensation Program ("DOL-OWCP"), which administers workers' compensation benefits to federal employees who suffered an injury, disease, or death in the performance of duty. Gilmore is alleged to have conspired with another physician and a former United States Postal Service employee and union official to submit the false and fraudulent claims.

The alleged false claims include claims for knee braces, including several instances where "DOL-OWCP" was billed for multiple expensive custom knee braces for a single claimant; physical therapy, including an instance where "DOL-OWCP" was billed for multiple hours of physical therapy while the claimant was having knee surgery; as well as platelet rich plasma treatments and at-home ultrasonic devices that were not medically necessary, never provided, and/or not provided as represented. In all, Gilmore and his co-conspirators submitted approximately \$19 million in false and fraudulent claims to "DOL-OWCP", of which at least approximately \$17 million was paid. Over \$1 million was seized from bank accounts controlled by Gilmore. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Renee Hunter of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas.

Gary Martin, 62, of McKinney, Texas, was charged by indictment with conspiracy to solicit or receive kickbacks for referrals to a federal health care program and solicitation and receipt of kickbacks in connection with the submission of over \$73 million in false and fraudulent medical claims to Medicare for over-the-counter COVID-19 ("OTC COVID-19") tests in 2023. As alleged in the indictment, Martin, the owner of medical clinics, conspired with health care providers and other individuals to pay and receive kickbacks based on Medicare reimbursements for OTC COVID-19 tests. In order to bill Medicare for the claims, Martin and his co-conspirators are alleged to have provided Medicare patient information, to which they had access, to co-conspirators without the Medicare beneficiaries' knowledge or consent and/or notwithstanding that they had not requested any OTC COVID-19 tests. In fact, as alleged in the indictment, in numerous instances the beneficiary was deceased.

Once Medicare paid the claim, Martin's co-conspirator allegedly paid a kickback based on the reimbursement. Martin's co-defendant, Damon Heath Roberts, previously pled guilty to conspiracy to pay or offer to pay kickbacks for referrals to a federal health care program in connection with the scheme and is awaiting sentencing. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Renee Hunter of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas.

Khadeer Khan Mohammed, 44, a citizen of India, was charged by indictment with health care fraud in connection with a scheme to submit false and fraudulent medical claims to Medicare for genetic testing that was allegedly never requested, ordered and/or performed. As alleged in the indictment, Mohammed, the owner of American Premier Labs LLC, located in Richardson, Texas, used the personal identifying information of physicians with no relationship to the Medicare beneficiaries, and without the physicians' knowledge or consent, to submit the false and fraudulent claims to Medicare. In all, Mohammed caused the submission of approximately \$93 million in false and fraudulent claims, of which approximately \$65 million was paid, including payment of approximately \$13 million over a single ten-day period in 2023. Nearly \$6 million was seized from bank accounts controlled by Mohammed. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Renee Hunter of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas.

Olatunbosun Osukoya, 67, of Plano, Texas, was charged by indictment with conspiracy to commit health care fraud in connection with the submission of over \$25 million in false and fraudulent medical claims to Medicare, TRICARE, and other insurers for electroencephalogram (EEG) testing. As alleged in the indictment, Osukoya, the owner of Ayo Biometrics, LLC d/b/a Cambridge Diagnostics, sought out individuals with insurance plans to undergo expensive EEG testing and recruited and paid kickbacks and bribes to physicians and others to refer patients to Cambridge Diagnostics. To conceal the scheme and to make it appear that the services were necessary, Osukoya and his co-conspirators allegedly falsified diagnoses and falsely labeled kickback payments as loans, medical directorships, and consultation fees, among other things. Osukoya, through Cambridge Diagnostics, was paid over \$5 million for the claims and is alleged to have paid out over \$450,000 in illegal kickbacks. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Renee Hunter of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

Rami Abunakira, 39, of Richmond, Texas, was charged by information with one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay and receive health care kickbacks and one count of payment of health care kickbacks in connection with a scheme to bill Medicare for medically unnecessary genetic tests that were induced by kickbacks. As alleged in the information, Abunakira helped operate a Dallas-based laboratory called LabCare, including by communicating with marketers who were receiving illegal kickbacks in exchange for the referral of Medicare beneficiary DNA samples and signed doctors' orders for genetic testing. During part of the time Abunakira operated LabCare, its beneficial owner—who had previously been indicted with health care fraud and kickback conspiracies for operating laboratories that billed Medicare for genetic testing and was prohibited from working in the health care or medical fields—had absconded from prosecution but continued to operate LabCare through Abunakira and through a straw owner. Abunakira assisted the beneficial owner in operating LabCare despite knowing that the beneficial owner was not supposed to be involved in owning or operating LabCare.

While LabCare was operating, Abunakira set up a new lab called GeneTX. Although Abunakira was the beneficial owner of GeneTX, he concealed his ownership interest in GeneTX and enrolled GeneTX in Medicare through a nominee owner. While operating GeneTX, Abunakira negotiated illegal kickback arrangements with marketers, many of whom employed call centers and telemarketing campaigns to target Medicare beneficiaries, which Abunakira and the marketers concealed with sham hourly agreements and invoices that made it appear as though the marketers were being paid based on the number of hours worked and not on the volume of DNA samples and signed doctors' orders sent to GeneTX. After Medicare issued a payment suspension to GeneTX, Abunakira began to bill Medicare for genetic testing through another laboratory called Appolo Precision, which like GeneTX, enrolled in Medicare by listing a nominee owner and concealing Abunakira's ownership interest.

As with GeneTX, Appolo received the DNA samples and signed doctors' orders for genetic testing through illegal kickbacks to marketers that were concealed through sham hourly marketing agreements invoices. Abunakira and his co-conspirators submitted approximately \$51.5 million in false and fraudulent claims to Medicare through the three laboratories, and Medicare paid approximately \$33.5 million based on those claims. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Andrew Tamayo and Monica Cooper of the Texas Strike Force.

Sacha Lashun Betts, 47, of Houston, Texas, Nicholas Aguillard, 49, of Rosenberg, Texas, Lisa Darlene Durden, 60, of Missouri City, Texas, Jordan O. Williams, 56, of Missouri City, Texas, Quincy Guillory, 51, of Richmond, Texas, Mykel Walker, 42, of Cypress, Texas, and Kaeita Rankin, 48, were all charged by indictment with conspiracy to distribute and dispense controlled substances in connection with the establishment, oversight, and operation of a drug trafficking organization that controlled more than a dozen "front" pharmacies used to sell opioids and other commonly abused prescription drugs, often in bulk, to street-level drug dealers on Houston's black market. As alleged in the indictment, from 2015 through 2022, the defendants' pharmacies unlawfully distributed and dispensed more than 4.4 million doses of opioids and other commonly abused prescription drugs, with an estimated street value exceeding \$75 million.

Betts first served as a pharmacist at two Houston-area ProMed Pharmacy locations she owned; however, beginning in or around 2019, Betts financed and controlled the enterprise's pharmacies off-paper, often remotely. In one charged conspiracy, Betts conspired with Durden, a pharmacist; Williams, a financier and sometimes-drug runner; Guillory, a drug trafficker; and Rankin, who would find pharmacies for the enterprise to purchase, set them up, and then assist in shutting them down and reselling them. Aguillard is charged with conspiring with Betts to unlawfully operate Houston-area pharmacy WeCare in the same manner. Walker is charged with conspiring with Betts to operate Houston-area pharmacy Humble and Pacific. As alleged, the co-conspirators all sold opioids and other commonly abused prescription drugs to street-level drug traffickers in exchange for cash. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Drew Pennebaker of the Texas Strike Force.

Jason Bruce, 56, of League City, Texas, and Gerren Brignac, 36, of Rosharon, Texas, were charged by Indictment; and Ronald Martin, 45, of Sugarland, Texas, was charged by information, all with conspiracy to distribute and dispense controlled substances in connection with their ownership and operation of Ennis St. Pharmacy. As alleged in the indictment and information, Bruce and Martin owned Ennis St. Pharmacy, which distributed approximately 113,000 pills of hydrocodone and more than 73,000 pills of carisoprodol between November 2019 and August 2020. During part of that time, Brignac worked as Ennis St. Pharmacy's pharmacist-in-charge. As alleged, the co-conspirators sold controlled substances to street-level drug traffickers, which were referred to as "runners," in exchange for cash. In addition, Bruce owned a pharmacist staffing company from which he allegedly supplied pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to several other Houston-area pill mill pharmacies. The case is being prosecuted by Acting Assistant Chief Devon Helfmeyer of the Texas Strike Force.

Trevor L. Cherry, 51, of Houston, Texas, Douglas M. Parks III, 35, of Katy, Texas, and Evelyn Ngozi-Emeka Onukwube, 53, of Noblesville, Indiana, were charged by indictment with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute controlled substances and illegal distribution of a controlled substance in connection with their diversion of approximately half a million opioids onto the black market. Cherry and Parks were also charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering. As alleged in the indictment, Cherry, Parks, and Onukwube, a licensed pharmacist, used Houston-area pharmacies as fronts and pass-throughs to facilitate their crimes, ultimately selling controlled substances with an estimated street value of at least \$8 million to drug dealers. Cherry's role in the scheme included picking up controlled substances at the subject pharmacies and delivering them to black market buyers.

Parks, who served as the paper owner of one of the pharmacies but is not a pharmacist, also filled prescriptions for controlled substances and assisted Cherry in diverting these drugs onto the black market. Parks and Cherry also made cash deposits into various bank accounts in amounts meant to evade detection by banks and law enforcement. Onukwube, who served as pharmacist-in-charge at the subject pharmacies, facilitated the scheme by inappropriately ordering and dispensing opioids and other commonly abused prescription drugs—providing a steady stream of the drugs for Parks and Cherry to divert onto the black market. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Drew Pennebaker and Benjamin Smith of the Texas Strike Force.

Alvin Elliott, 56, of Katy, Texas, was charged by indictment with four counts of unlawfully distributing controlled substances, specifically 211 oxycodone pills, 812 hydrocodone pills, and 2,043 carisoprodol (Soma) pills. As alleged in the indictment, Elliott owned and operated Houston-area pharmacies. Elliott illegally sold the controlled substances to another individual, who arranged for their pickup by black market buyers, couriers, and others. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Gary A. Crosby II of the Gulf Coast Strike Force.

Chad Harper, 49, of Pearland, Texas, was charged by indictment with conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay and receive health care kickbacks, paying health care

kickbacks, bank fraud conspiracy, bank fraud, money laundering conspiracy, and engaging in monetary transactions in property derived from a specified unlawful activity, all in connection with a \$115 Medicare fraud scheme. As alleged in the indictment, Harper owned multiple laboratories through which he billed Medicare approximately \$115 million for genetic and other diagnostic testing that was induced by kickbacks and bribes, medically unnecessary, or otherwise ineligible for Medicare. Medicare paid Harper's laboratories approximately \$73 million based on these claims.

The Indictment alleges that Harper generated business through a nationwide network of marketers who directed referrals to the laboratories in exchange for illegal kickbacks that Harper paid through shell companies. Harper funded his operation through, among other ways, obtaining a fraudulent "equipment loan" from a local credit union. Finally, Harper allegedly laundered the proceeds of his schemes through other shell companies, which purchased and held real properties and assets and passed profits on to Harper. The case is being prosecuted by Acting Assistant Chief Devon Helfmeyer and Trial Attorneys Adam Tisdall and Andrew Tamayo of the Texas Strike Force, with assistance from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

David Jenson, 57, and Nestor Rafael Romero Magallanes, 29, of Spring, Texas, were charged by superseding indictment with conspiracy, health care fraud, and money laundering in connection with an alleged scheme to fraudulently bill Medicare \$90 million for highly expensive skin substitutes. Jenson is a podiatrist who owned Doctor's Inc., a clinic in the suburbs north of Houston. Romero was the clinic's chief executive officer. As alleged in the superseding indictment, the defendants submitted claims for highly expensive skin substitutes for patients that did not have qualifying wounds, or any wounds at all.

The defendants were warned that their billing was improper when they were audited in early 2023, yet they continued to bill after the audit. In addition, in the weeks following a search warrant, defendants pressured patients into writing false statements claiming they had qualifying wounds in an attempt to interfere with the investigation. Over \$70 million in cryptocurrency and \$13 million from the clinic's bank account has been seized. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brad Gray and Kathryn Olson of the Southern District of Texas, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristine Rollinson is handling forfeiture matters.

Daphne Johnson, 60, of Stafford, Texas, was charged by information with health care fraud in connection with a scheme to bill Medicaid \$793,804 for mental health therapy services she never provided. As alleged in the information, Johnson received \$331,112 as a result of her fraudulent scheme. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander Alum of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Larry Lorentsen, 39, and Brandon Lorentsen, 30, both of Port Richie, Florida, were charged by information with one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud in connection with a \$70.5 million durable medical equipment ("DME") fraud scheme. As alleged in the information, the Lorentsens purchased Medicare beneficiary information and used straw owners for purported DME suppliers and laboratories to bill Medicare for

orthotic braces and COVID-19 over-the-counter test kits that were medically unnecessary, ineligible for reimbursement, not requested or desired by the beneficiaries, not provided as represented, and/or procured through the payment of illegal kickbacks and bribes. Larry Lorentsen and others allegedly submitted approximately \$63.2 million in false and fraudulent claims for DME, for which Medicare paid approximately \$29.4 million. Brandon Lorentsen and others allegedly submitted approximately \$7.3 million in false and fraudulent claims, for which Medicare paid approximately \$2.9 million. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Ethan Womble of the Texas Strike Force and Senior Litigation Counsel Catherine Wagner of the National Rapid Response Strike Force.

Nathaniel Mitchell, 56, and Raquel Mitchell, 42, both of Pearland, Texas, and Tracy Flanigan, 56, and Robin Turner, 58, both of Houston, Texas, were charged by indictment with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute and dispense controlled substances and six counts of unlawfully distributing and dispensing controlled substances. As alleged in the indictment, Nathaniel Mitchell and Raquel Mitchell, along with pharmacist-in-charge Robin Turner, operated RM Pharmacy as a front for illegal drug distribution, rather than for conducting legitimate pharmacy business. Raquel Mitchell ordered controlled substances on behalf of the pharmacy while knowing and intending that those controlled substances would be illegally distributed and dispensed to drug traffickers, including Flanigan, and handled the cash proceeds from the illegal sales. Nathaniel Mitchell coordinated with drug traffickers, including Flanigan, to bring patients with illegitimate prescriptions for controlled substances to the pharmacy. Turner then filled the prescriptions knowing that they were issued without a legitimate medical purpose. Flanigan recruited and transported individuals to obtain illegitimate prescriptions for opioids and fill the prescriptions at RM Pharmacy. Flanigan then paid the individuals for the drugs and resold the drugs to other dealers and street-level users.

Through RM Pharmacy, the defendants are alleged to have illegally dispensed at least 113,900 pills of oxycodone and hydrocodone and at least 28,300 carisoprodol pills. The case is being prosecuted by Counsel to the Chief of the Health Care Fraud Unit Alexis Gregorian and Trial Attorney Claire Horrell of the Florida Strike Force.

Tyneza P. Mitchell, 43, of Spring, Texas, was charged by indictment with wire fraud in connection with a scheme to bill the COVID-19 Claims Reimbursement to Health Care Providers and Facilities for Testing, Treatment, and Vaccine Administration for the Uninsured Program for in-office consultations regarding COVID diagnosis and treatment she never provided. As alleged in the indictment, Mitchell, a licensed nurse practitioner, received at least \$2,129,500.33 as a result of her fraudulent scheme. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Lu and Thomas Carter of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Carlos Munoz, 57, of Richmond, Texas was charged by information in connection with a bribery scheme. Munoz, a medical doctor, is alleged to have been paid approximately \$305,000 in kickbacks and bribes by Dera Ogudo, owner of United Palliative & Hospice ("UPHC"), to certify and re-certify Medicare and Medicaid patients for hospices services that they didn't need or qualify for. As a result of this scheme, Ogudo and UPHC submitted

or caused the submission of over \$59 million in claims for hospice services that were medically unnecessary and/or predicated on illegal kickbacks, of which over \$42 million was paid. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathryn Olson and Brad Gray of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Dera Ogudo, 39, of Richmond, Texas, Victoria Martinez, 35, of Richmond, Texas and Evelyn Shaw, 52, of Houston, Texas were charged by indictment with a \$110 million health care fraud and kickbacks scheme. According to the indictment, Ogudo and Martinez operated a hospice company, United Palliative & Hospice Company ("UPHC"), that misled vulnerable elderly adults living in Houston-area group homes or assisted living facilities, or recently discharged from a local psychiatric hospital, about what services were being billed to their Medicare and Medicaid plans. According to court documents, UPHC Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and/or their family members believed they would be receiving "palliative" or "home health services." In truth, these patients were enrolled in hospice services and were not actually terminally ill as required by Medicare and Medicaid. Ogudo allegedly paid kickbacks to several group home owners in exchange for enrolling their Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries in hospice with UPHC.

Ogudo also paid kickbacks to Shaw in exchange for referrals from a local psychiatric hospital where Shaw was employed as discharge coordinator. Later in 2024, when the investigation became known, Ogudo and Martinez transferred patients to two new hospice companies, Residential and Cedar Hospices under Martinez's purported ownership to disguise the involvement of Ogudo and continue billing Medicare.

Medicare and Medicaid paid approximately \$87 million to UPHC, Residential and Cedar Hospices based on false and fraudulent claims. Over \$5 million in bank accounts and properties has been seized. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathryn Olson and Brad Gray of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Brandon Fyffe is handling asset forfeiture.

Augustine "Austin" Onyeka, 53, of Richmond, Texas, was charged by indictment with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute and dispense controlled substances for diverting approximately 216,500 pills of oxycodone and hydrocodone onto the black market. As alleged in the indictment, Onyeka, the co-director of Tulipanes Pharmacy, purchased and coached his co-conspirator how to purchase large quantities of Schedule II controlled substances and then sold them in bulk to drug traffickers who he called his "homeboys." The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Yael Mash of Texas Strike Force.

Okwudili "Okwy" Okpara, 60, of Sugarland, Texas, was charged by information with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute and dispense controlled substances for diverting 216,500 pills of oxycodone and hydrocodone onto the black market. As alleged in the information, Okpara, the pharmacist-in-charge of Tulipanes Pharmacy, purchased and facilitated the sale of large quantities of Schedule II controlled substances to drug traffickers. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Yael Mash of Texas Strike Force.

Keilan Peterson a/k/a "Young Jay" a/k/a "Jay," 38, of Houston, Texas and Kimberly Martinez, 47, of Houston, Texas were charged by indictment for their alleged participation in a scheme to unlawfully distribute and dispense controlled substances in exchange for cash through Relief Medical Center and GroveCare clinics in Houston, Texas. As alleged in the indictment, Peterson paid three doctors to allow Peterson, Martinez, and others at the clinics to use the doctors' electronic prescribing credentials to issue prescriptions for significant amounts of hydrocodone, carisoprodol, and oxycodone.

Peterson also allegedly sent some of these illegitimate prescriptions to his own pharmacy, Next Level Pharmacy, that he owned through a straw owner, and took possession of the controlled substances to sell on the black market. As alleged in the indictment, investigators located at Peterson's residence five pill bottles of oxycodone and a bag with 92 grams of loose oxycodone pills. In total, the indictment alleges that over 2 million controlled substance pills, including over 250,000 oxycodone pills, over 1.3 million hydrocodone pills, and over 720,000 carisoprodol pills, were issued by Peterson, Martinez, and others at Relief Medical and GroveCare clinics, the vast majority of which was unauthorized, were issued without a legitimate medical purpose, and outside the usual course of professional practice.

Over \$150,000 in cash, jewelry, and properties was seized in connection with the charges. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathryn Olson and Christine Lu of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas; Assistant U.S. Attorney Brandon Fyffe is handling asset forfeiture.

Dr. Maryam "Meg" Qayum, 67, of New Caney, Texas, Jared Williams, 48, of Pearland, Texas, and Tomi-Ko Bowers, 70, Lester "Lay" Stokes, 37, and Melvin Sampson, 55, all of Houston, Texas, and were charged by indictment with multiple counts of illegally distributing a controlled substance. Dr. Qayum, Bowers, Stokes, and Sampson were also charged with conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, and Dr. Qayum and Bowers were charged with engaging in monetary transactions in proceeds of specified unlawful activities. The charges stem from the defendants' role in diverting more than 3 million opioids onto the black market. As alleged in the indictment, Dr. Qayum (a medical doctor), Bowers (an advanced practice registered nurse), and Stokes operated Recare Clinic in Kingwood, Texas, as a pill mill, selling oxycodone and hydrocodone prescriptions to drug traffickers in exchange for cash. Sampson is alleged to be one such drug trafficker, who recruited individuals to pose as patients, paid cash for the prescriptions from Dr. Qayum, filled Dr. Qayum's prescriptions at complicit pharmacies, and resold the drugs on the black market. Among the complicit pharmacies where Sampson filled Dr. Qayum's illegitimate prescriptions was Surge Rx, where Williams was owner and pharmacist-in-charge. In addition, Dr. Qayum and Bowers are charged with conducting transactions with the proceeds of their drug crimes. The case is being prosecuted by Acting Assistant Chief Devon Helfmeyer of the Texas Strike Force and Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathryn Olson of the Southern District of Texas.

Richard Rose, Jr., 51, of Manvel, Texas, Avayetta Montegue, 62, of Richmond, Texas, and Porshette Boykin, 36, Tyisha Robinson, 33, and Byron Clark, 40, all of Houston, Texas, were charged by indictment with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute and dispense

controlled substances. As alleged in the indictment, Rose owned and operated Live Rite Pharmacy and Meds4Less Pharmacy, and he maintained the businesses to create a veneer of legitimacy. Montegue, the pharmacist-in-charge at both pharmacies, filled prescriptions that she knew were illegitimate, often handed over in batches directly to drug traffickers. Boykin and Robinson, pharmacy technicians, ordered controlled substances, coordinated pickups by drug traffickers, and collected cash for deposit into nominee bank accounts.

Clark recruited people to pose as patients and obtain illegitimate prescriptions to be filled at Rose's pharmacies. He then paid them for the drugs and resold the drugs to other dealers and street-level users. The defendants and others, through Live Rite Pharmacy, allegedly purchased at least 566,000 pills of oxycodone and hydrocodone and at least 51,874 carisoprodol pills. In addition, Rose, Boykin, and Robinson are charged in a money laundering conspiracy for disguising the criminal proceeds through structuring and layered bank transactions via shell accounts. Finally, Rose, Montegue, and Clark are charged with two counts of unlawfully distributing and dispensing a controlled substance. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Erika V. Suhr of the Los Angeles Strike Force.

Harold Shatz, 85, of Boca Raton, Florida, and Edward Shatz, 71, of Delray Beach, Florida, were charged by information with conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay and receive health care kickbacks in connection with a scheme to bill Medicare for medically unnecessary genetic tests that were induced by kickbacks. As alleged in the information, Harold Shatz and Edward Shatz negotiated an illegal kickback arrangement between laboratories in Houston, Texas, and marketers who operated call centers that solicited Medicare beneficiaries for genetic testing. Under this arrangement, the call center marketers ran telemarketing campaigns targeting Medicare beneficiaries and paid telemedicine companies to obtain signed doctors' orders for genetic testing, which the call center marketers sold to Houston laboratories Access DX and New Dawn in exchange for a forty percent kickback on Medicare reimbursements of the referred genetic tests. The defendants, the call center marketers, and their co-conspirators concealed their kickback arrangement with sham hourly marketing contracts and invoices. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Andrew Tamayo and Monica Cooper of the Texas Strike Force.

Andre Williams, 53, of Pearland, Texas, and Monique Washington, 44, of Fairburn, Georgia, were charged by indictment with conspiracy to unlawfully distribute and dispense controlled substances in connection with their ownership and operation of a Houston-area pill-mill pharmacy. As alleged in the indictment, from in or around August 2023 through in or around March 2025, Williams and Washington ran ServMed Pharmacy as a front so that they could purchase opioids and other commonly abused prescription drugs and sell them onto the black market for cash. In that way, Williams and Washington purchased approximately 57,000 pills of oxycodone 30 mg, 44,000 pills of hydrocodone 10-325 mg, 70,500 pills of carisoprodol 350 mg, 36,500 pills of alprazolam 2 mg, and 164 pints of promethazine with codeine, said drugs having a street value of over \$2.8 million. As alleged, the drugs were then unlawfully distributed, in bulk, to drug traffickers, for cash; there were no patients, prescriptions, or physicians involved. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Drew Pennebaker of the Texas Strike Force.

Brandy Williams, 42, of Houston, Texas was charged by information with conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay and receive kickbacks for participating in a scheme to pay illegal health care kickbacks in exchange for prescriptions for medically unnecessary footbath drugs. As alleged in the information, Williams offered and paid kickbacks to her co-conspirator, a podiatrist, in exchange for the referral of prescriptions for medically unnecessary footbath drugs that were ultimately billed to Medicare. As a result of this scheme, between January 2021 and March 2022, Williams's pharmacy was paid over \$4 million by Medicare. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Monica Cooper of the Texas Strike Force.

WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

Hector Almanza, 41, and Diana Almanza, 39, both of San Antonio, Texas, were charged by information with conspiracy to defraud the United States and pay and receive health care kickbacks in connection with a hospice fraud scheme. As alleged in the information, the Almanzas paid marketers illegal kickbacks to induce Medicare beneficiary referrals to the Almanzas' company, Four Winds Hospice. Based on those referrals, the Almanzas caused the submission of \$1,692,950 in false and fraudulent claims for hospice services that were procured through illegal kickback and bribes, medically unnecessary, and ineligible for Medicare reimbursement. Medicare paid approximately \$529,287 based on those claims. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Ethan Womble of the Texas Strike Force and Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Chung of the Western District of Texas.

Cases compiled by The Center Square.