



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Edward J. Tarver

Southern District of Georgia

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BRUNSWICK RESIDENT CHARGED WITH MEDICARE FRAUD

Defendant allegedly submitted false claims for leg braces and other medical devices

BRUNSWICK, GA: CECIL RISHER, 36, from Brunswick, Georgia, was charged today with attempting to steal more than one hundred thousand dollars from Medicare through two medical equipment suppliers located in Brunswick, Georgia, and Houston, Texas. RISHER was arrested today by federal authorities on a Criminal Complaint. RISHER's initial appearance in federal court is scheduled to be held at the Brunswick Federal Courthouse on Thursday, October 7, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. before United States Magistrate Judge James E. Graham.

United States Attorney Edward J. Tarver said, "Today's arrest is evidence of the United States Attorney's commitment to prosecuting those who steal from the American people by defrauding Medicare. This Office will work aggressively and collaboratively with our partners at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Health and Human Services to stamp out Medicare fraud, and protect Medicare beneficiaries and the American taxpayer."

According to a Criminal Complaint filed in federal court in Brunswick:

In 2008, CECIL RISHER operated Preferred Prosthetics and Orthotics ("Preferred"), located at 3635 Altama Avenue, in Brunswick, Georgia. Preferred purported to be a supplier of durable medical equipment ("DME"), including ankle braces, knee braces, back braces and other orthotic and prosthetic devices. Before Preferred, RISHER was employed at Team Orthotics & Prosthetics, Inc. ("Team"), located in Houston, Texas. At both Preferred and Team, RISHER was primarily responsible billing Medicare for medical equipment purportedly provided to patients.

According to the Criminal Complaint, RISHER, assisted by others, routinely billed Medicare for medical devices that were never provided to patients, not medically necessary, or not prescribed by a physician. RISHER and his coconspirators allegedly executed the scheme by stealing the identifying information of both Medicare patients and doctors, and using that information to submit more than \$100,000 worth of phony claims to Medicare.

The Complaint charges RISHER with one count of Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000; one count of Health Care Fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment; and one count of Aggravated Identity Theft, which requires a 2-year consecutive prison sentence to any other sentence imposed.

Mr. Tarver noted that the charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the Defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Tarver praised the investigative work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Health Human Services, Office of the Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Brian T. Rafferty is prosecuting the case.

For additional information, please contact First Assistant United States Attorney James D. Durham at (912) 201-2547.