



U.S. Department of Justice

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**For Immediate Release:
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Sep 3, 2009

Event: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Sohrab Shafinia

OAKLAND COUNTY DOCTOR PLEADS TO CONSPIRACY

A Farmington physician pleaded guilty today to charges of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance and to distribute a controlled substance, United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced.

Berg was joined in the announcement by Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Detroit Field Division.

Sohrab Shafinia, 48, entered the guilty plea in United States District Court before Judge Julian Abele Cook, Jr.

“The type of criminal violations committed by Shafina, a licensed doctor, constitute a total abuse of trust by the physician that endangers the safety of their patients,” said United States Attorney Berg. “Doctors who risk the safety of the public for personal gain can expect to face charges and as well as prison.”

Robert L. Corso, Special Agent in Charge of DEA's Detroit Field Division stated, "The DEA has made it a priority to address the dangerous practice of illegally diverting prescription medications. Prescription drugs such as Oxycontin are controlled substances, because if they are abused, they can lead to addiction, illness, or even death. As a physician, Dr. Shafinia violated the public trust by engaging with others to illegally divert prescription drugs to the black market. This conviction makes it clear that the DEA, and our partners in law enforcement, will continue to utilize our investigative techniques to bring to justice those individuals that are responsible for the illegal distribution of prescription medicines."

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea, Dr. Shafinia a doctor of osteopathy licensed to practice by the State of Michigan, admitted that between October of 2005 and May of 2007, he met, on various occasions, with Stuart Stein, Randell McDaniel and Gerald Richards at his medical office(s) and at different locations such as parking lots and restaurants in and around Oakland County for the purpose of writing prescriptions for controlled substances in exchange for cash payment. Dr. Shafinia allowed Stein, McDaniel and Richards to bring additional "patients" to him or the names of patients for whom he would prescribe the same drugs in exchange for cash. Dr. Shafinia referred the prescription recipients to SafeScript Pharmacy in Farmington Hills, where Richard Riozzi, a pharmacist licensed by the State of Michigan, worked as a full time pharmacist. Dr. Shafinia issued prescriptions for over 18,000 dosage units of Oxycontin™ and its generic equivalent oxycodone HCL.

A sentencing hearing was set by Judge Cook for 1 p.m. November 23, 2009.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie Dawkins Davis.