



Department of Justice

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04/07/09

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**“ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE” CLINIC OPERATOR
PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL HEALTH CARE FRAUD**

***Beckwith Defrauded Insurance Companies and Medicare
of More Than \$1 Million in “Hyperbaric Therapy” Scheme***

Atlanta, GA - CHAUNSAY BECKWITH, 46, of Tucker, Georgia, pleaded guilty today in federal district court to a charge of health care fraud in connection with the operation of her clinic, “International Alternative Medicine, Inc.” She was indicted on 35 counts of health care fraud by a federal grand jury on December 16, 2008.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, “Hyperbaric chambers have a number of legitimate medical uses, as varied as helping burn victims and even scuba divers in their recovery. This defendant, however, turned a hyperbaric chamber into a means of generating over a million dollars in fraudulent claims. Health care fraud raises the costs of health care for everyone.”

According to Nahmias and information presented in court: Between 2003 and 2007, BECKWITH, an owner/operator who does not hold any type of medical license, provided hyperbaric oxygen therapy to numerous patients in her clinic, International Alternative Medicine, Inc., located at 4450 Hugh Howell Road, in Tucker, Georgia. None of the patients were diagnosed with medical conditions that made them eligible to receive payments from health care benefit programs. BECKWITH submitted \$1,577,827 in claims to insurance companies and Medicare, which included false diagnosis codes that enabled her to fraudulently receive \$1,035,144 in payments for the hyperbaric chamber treatments.

BECKWITH could receive a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

Sentencing is scheduled for June 18, 2009, at 2 p.m., before Senior United States District Judge Marvin H. Shoob.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney David E. McClernan is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.