

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pennsauken Doctor Sentenced to 63 Months in Federal Prison for illegally Dispensing Oxycodone

(More)

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CAMDEN – A Pennsauken doctor was sentenced to 63 months in federal prison today illegally selling prescriptions for oxycodone without a legitimate medical purpose and outside the usual course of professional practice, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler also ordered Dr. Pankaj Agrawal, 62, of Winslow, to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison sentence. Judge Kugler continued Agrawal's release on a \$500,000 secured bond pending his surrender to officials with the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, on a date to be determined by prison authorities.

As part of Agrawal's guilty plea, he agreed to forfeit approximately \$177,000 and a 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe, which were seized at the time of his arrest. In addition, Agrawal today forfeited to the government an additional \$154,869 that he had sent to India.

On March 25, 2009, Agrawal pleaded guilty before Judge Kugler to a two-count Information. Agrawal, who had maintained a practice at Pennsauken Medical Center located in Pennsauken, pleaded guilty to one count each of illegally dispensing oxycodone, in the form of Percocet prescriptions, without a legitimate medical purpose and outside the usual course of professional practice and money laundering.

At his plea hearing, Agrawal admitted that between February 2005 and June 2008, he illegally sold bottles of promethazine cough syrup with codeine and numerous prescriptions for Percocet. Specifically, Agrawal admitted that on four occasions between January 2008 and June 2008, he sold prescriptions for Percocet to an individual, who he later learned was a confidential informant ("CI"), in the names of individuals other than that of the CI. For instance, on June 6, 2008, Agrawal sold prescriptions for Percocet in twelve different names that were provided to him by the CI. During each visit, Agrawal did not treat or examine the CI, he admitted. Furthermore, Agrawal accepted responsibility, as relevant conduct, for the sale of 60 additional prescriptions to the confidential informant or his associates.

Additionally, Agrawal admitted that on June 3, 2008, he deposit into a Beneficial Bank account \$15,000 in cash that represented proceeds from illegally distributing controlled substances.

Agrawal was arrested on a criminal Complaint at his home on June 27, 2008, and later that day had an initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Joel Schneider in federal court in Camden.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Kugler consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the FBI's South Jersey Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Janice K. Fedarczyk in Philadelphia; the DEA's Maple Shade Resident Office and the Newark Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer; and the IRS Criminal Investigation's Paterson Post of Duty, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord in Newark, with the investigation.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Skahill of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Vincent J. Pancari, Esq. Vineland