



## U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **PHILADELPHIA PHYSICIAN INDICTED FOR OPERATING “PILL MILL” – OFFICE ASSISTANTS ALSO CHARGED**

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Pat Meehan today announced the filing of an indictment<sup>1</sup> against Evelyn Sabugo, M.D., charging that Dr. Sabugo illegally conspired to distribute Schedule II controlled substances from July 2002 to September 2006.

Sabugo allegedly operated her medical practice, located at 450 West Dauphin Street in the Kensington area of Philadelphia, as a "pill-mill," meaning that she regularly sold prescriptions for controlled substances, for a fee, to so-called patients or customers without any legitimate medical purpose or any proper doctor/patient relationship, and outside the usual course of professional practice. A large number of these prescriptions were for highly addictive pain killers and amphetamines.

Also charged by indictment was Sabugo's office assistant Vanessa Redding, who allegedly stole blank prescriptions from Dr. Sabugo and sold them to customers on the side, for cash. At the same time, an information was filed against another Sabugo office assistant, Isabelita Rodriguez, for similar cash sales of prescriptions.

“Dr. Sabugo was selling prescriptions for hundreds of pills at a time,” said Meehan. “In these cases, this was a money-making operation much more than it was a medical practice. As the indictment alleges, these supposed “patients” of Dr. Sabugo’s were nothing more than customers whose welfare was not her concern.”

According to the indictment, Dr. Sabugo sold prescriptions for potentially dangerous pain killers like Oxycontin. Sabugo also assisted one of her customers in having fraudulent claims for these drugs submitted to the prescription benefits manager PharmaCare, which from July 2002 through September 2006, paid more than \$109,000 in claims for 284 prescriptions for these controlled substances.

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<sup>1</sup> An indictment or information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR DATE OF BIRTH
Evelyn F.P. Sabugo, M.D.	Philadelphia, PA	age 69
Vanessa Redding	Philadelphia, PA	age 51
Isabelita Rodriguez	Philadelphia, PA	age 37

If convicted, Sabugo faces a maximum possible sentence of over 100 years imprisonment, a mandatory minimum three years of supervised release, a \$5,250,000 fine, and a \$2,100 special assessment. The court may also require restitution to the insurer, and forfeiture of Sabugo's office building. Redding and Rodriguez each faces 60 years imprisonment, a mandatory minimum six-year period of supervised release, a \$1,000,000 fine, and a \$200 special assessment.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Drug Enforcement Administration, and has been assigned to Assistant United States Attorney Catherine L. Votaw.

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