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PHILADELPHIA DOCTOR SENTENCED FOR RUNNING PILL MILL

PHILADELPHIA - Laurence T. McKinney, M.D., 54, of Philadelphia, was sentenced today to 87 months in prison for illegally prescribing painkillers and sedatives outside the usual course of professional practice and not for a legitimate medical purpose. McKinney, a former board-certified OB-GYN, was the operator of McKinney Medical Center located at 7514 Frankford Avenue, in Philadelphia, which appeared to be a medical clinic, specializing in physical therapy and rehabilitation services, but in actuality was a prescription "pill mill." Dr. McKinney's patients ("customers") could, for a \$100 fee, obtain prescriptions for controlled and non-controlled prescription drugs without there being a legitimate medical purpose for these prescriptions. McKinney was convicted at trial March 30, 2010, on 30 out of 49 counts of distribution of controlled substances, and on the single count of maintaining a place for the illegal distribution of controlled substances. The jury found that Dr. McKinney was illegally prescribing dosages of two highly addictive drugs: Percocet, a Schedule II controlled substance used for acute pain, and Xanax, a Schedule IV controlled substance, an anti-anxiety agent and muscle relaxant. The two drugs are also among the most frequently abused, illegally distributed prescription drugs and have a high illegal street market value. The jury also found that McKinney used his medical office for the illegal sale of the prescriptions.

U.S. District Court Judge Michael M. Baylson, who called McKinney a recidivist and said McKinney was acting out of greed, also ordered the defendant to stop practicing medicine immediately. McKinney's medical license will be suspended for at least 10 years. He must also pay a \$2,500 fine, complete 3 years of supervised release following his prison term, and must pay a \$3,000 special assessment. He was ordered to report to prison November 1, 2010.

The case was investigated by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the Philadelphia Police. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Anita Eve.

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