



The United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
Western District of Louisiana

For Immediate Release
December 20, 2012

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**FORMER LAFAYETTE, LA CARDIOLOGIST REPORTS
TO PRISON TO BEGIN TEN YEAR SENTENCE**

Lafayette, La.: United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that Dr. Mehmood M. Patel, 67, a former Lafayette cardiologist surrendered to the Bureau of Prisons on December 17, 2012, to begin serving a ten year sentence.

After a three month trial which began on October 1, 2008, Dr. Patel was convicted by a federal jury on 51 counts of healthcare fraud. Dr. Patel, who practiced interventional cardiology in Lafayette, La. and surrounding areas for more than 25 years, was found guilty of falsifying patient symptoms in medical records, falsifying findings on medical tests, and performing unnecessary coronary procedures such as deploying angioplasty balloons and stents.

Testimony at trial revealed that Mehmood M. Patel, M.D., who has been practicing interventional cardiology in Lafayette, Louisiana and surrounding areas for more than 25 years, was falsifying patient symptoms in medical records, falsifying findings on medical tests, and performing unnecessary coronary procedures such as deploying angioplasty balloons and stents. Testimony from experts in cardiology specialties revealed that the defendant deployed stents, balloons and radiation in coronary arteries that had little or insignificant disease. Testifying medical experts included doctors from Emory University in Atlanta, GA, the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in Philadelphia, PA, Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City, and the University of California at Los Angeles, CA, as well as cardiologists practicing in Louisiana. Each expert testified about only a small number of the thousands of procedures performed annually for many years by Dr. Patel.

Testimony also revealed that Dr. Patel was performing unnecessary medical procedures and billing both Medicare and private insurance companies, which added up to millions of dollars paid to DR. PATEL and the hospitals where many of the procedures were performed. During the years 1999-2003, Dr. Patel was the number one biller in

cardiology services for the State of Louisiana. During the approximately three-year period covered by the indictment, Dr. Patel billed Medicare and private insurance companies more than \$3 million, of which he received \$541,745.00 from this scheme. The indicted charges included less than \$90,000.00 of the amount received by the defendant.

Dr. Patel was sentenced on June 4, 2009 to ten years in federal prison and has remained free out on a \$500,000 bond since 2009 while appealing the case. The 5th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals upheld his conviction in August 2012 and in November of 2012 turned down a requests by the former cardiologist to reconsider.

On December 3, 2012, U.S. District Judge Tucker Melancon signed an Order directing the defendant to self report to the U.S. Marshal Service in Lafayette, La., on December 17, 2012 at 2:00 p.m., to begin serving his sentence of incarceration.

United States Attorney Finley stated, "This case was about patient care and safety. Dr. Patel abused his oath as a medical professional in performing these unnecessary procedures. The jury, by convicting him of 51 counts, clearly sent a message that healthcare providers who defraud Medicare will be held accountable for their greed; the Judge, in sentencing Dr. Patel to the maximum sentence of 10 years, sent an even stronger message that criminal acts of this nature have serious consequences; we hope that Dr. Patel's service of his sentence will also send a message that there is a day of reckoning for anyone who fails to ethically care for their patients. The success of this case is a testament to the hard work of the prosecutors, agents and assistants who worked years on this case. They were, and continue to be, dedicated to ensuring that patients are protected and that this kind of criminal behavior is stopped. My office will continue to aggressively investigate healthcare fraud to ensure the safety of the patients."

The case was investigated by Health & Human Services and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Lafayette Resident Agency, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kelly P. Uebinger and former United States Attorney Donald W. Washington.

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