

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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NIAGARA COUNTY WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY
TO UTILIZING FRAUDULENT PRESCRIPTION
TO OBTAIN CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Theresa Gansworth, 25, of Sanborn, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess a controlled substance with intent to distribute before U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Arcara. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a fine of \$500,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John E. Rogowski, who is handling the case, stated that during February and March, 2010, Gansworth and a co-defendant conspired to utilize several prescriptions they knew were fraudulent to acquire Lortab, a prescription drug containing hydrocodone, from pharmacies in Niagara County. The prescriptions were purportedly authorized for third parties by Dr. Pravin Mehta, a doctor who closed his Niagara Falls medical office after being arrested on federal drug distribution charges on January 27, 2011.

Gansworth admitted she was a patient of Dr. Mehta and a pain pill addict when she was hired to work in his office in February 2010. While employed by Mehta, Gansworth tricked him into signing one blank prescription and then forged his signature on other prescriptions. Gansworth and her co-defendant then obtained Lortab from several pharmacies in Niagara County.

The Gansworth case is part of a larger investigation into the abuse of prescription drugs in Niagara Falls, New York. Gansworth is the sixth defendant to plead guilty.

The plea is the result of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge John P. Gilbride, Niagara Falls Police Department, under the direction of John

Chella, New York State Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (NYS-BNE) , the Internal Revenue Service, the New York State Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Niagara County Sheriff's Drug Task Force.

Sentencing is scheduled for October 5, 2011 at 1:00 pm before Judge Arcara.

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