

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LA.

2021 SEP 30 P 5:04

CASE NO. 21-122

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

FELONY

**INDICTMENT FOR
HEALTH CARE FRAUD, AGGRAVATED
IDENTITY THEFT, AND FALSE STATEMENTS**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*

CRIMINAL NO.

21-122

v.

*

SECTION:

SECT. M MAG. 3

BENJAMIN TEKIPPE

*

VIOLATIONS: 18 U.S.C. § 1347

18 U.S.C. § 1028A

18 U.S.C. § 1001

*

* * *

The Grand Jury charges that:

COUNTS 1-8
(Health Care Fraud)

A. AT ALL TIMES MATERIAL HEREIN:

1. The defendant, **BENJAMIN TEKIPPE** (“**TEKIPPE**”), was a licensed chiropractor in Louisiana.
2. **TEKIPPE** owned and operated his own practice, Metairie Chiropractic, located in Metairie, Louisiana, where he purported to provide chiropractic services to patients.
3. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana (“Blue Cross” or “BCBSLA”), and others,

___ Fee _____
 ___ Process _____
 X Dktd _____
 ___ CtRmDep _____
 ___ Doc.No. _____

were health care benefit programs, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 24(b). These health care benefit programs reimbursed health care providers when, among other criteria, services were actually provided.

4. To receive reimbursement for a covered service from a health care benefit program, a health care provider had to submit a claim form containing, among other things: the dates of service, the patient's name, diagnosis, insurance number, date of birth, the health care services provided, the assigned provider number, and the charge for each service provided.

5. The health care benefit programs paid for covered services for which a representation had been made that the services were provided to patients.

6. SOAP is an acronym for subjective, objective, assessment, and plan and is a method of documenting a patient visit.

B. THE SCHEME AND ARTIFICE TO DEFRAUD:

1. **TEKIPPE** knowingly participated in a scheme to defraud a health care benefit program, namely Blue Cross, and to obtain, by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, money and property owned by, and under the custody and control of, a health care benefit program, in connection with the delivery of and payment for health care benefits and services, which scheme is further described in the following paragraphs.

2. It was part of the scheme that defendant **TEKIPPE** submitted, and caused to be submitted, fraudulent claims to health care benefit programs that falsely represented that certain health care services were provided to patients, when defendant **TEKIPPE** knew that those services were not actually provided.

C. THE OFFENSE:

Beginning in or around February 2017, and continuing through on or about July 22, 2020, in the Eastern District of Louisiana and elsewhere, the defendant did knowingly and willfully execute a scheme and artifice to defraud Blue Cross, a federal health care benefit program affecting commerce, and other health care benefit programs, within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 24(b), in connection with the payment for health care benefits, items, and services.

On or about the dates and in the approximate amounts set forth below, within the Eastern District of Louisiana and elsewhere, the defendant, **BENJAMIN TEKIPPE**, for the purpose of executing and attempting to execute the fraudulent scheme described above, knowingly and willfully submitted, or caused to be submitted, claims for payment on or about the dates and in the approximate amounts listed below for the following services, which were not provided:

| Count | BCBSLA Member | Purported Date of Service | Amount |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | ██████ | 9/9/2019 | \$420 |
| 2 | ██████ | 9/9/2019 | \$420 |
| 3 | ██████ | 9/10/2019 | \$420 |
| 4 | ██████ | 9/11/2019 | \$420 |
| 5 | ██████ | 9/11/2019 | \$315 |
| 6 | ██████ | 10/7/2019 | \$400 |
| 7 | ██████ | 10/5/2019 | \$420 |
| 8 | ██████ | 10/10/2019 | \$520 |

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1347.

COUNT 9
(Aggravated Identity Theft)

A. AT ALL TIMES MATERIAL HEREIN:

The allegations contained in Parts A, B, and C of Counts 1 through 8 are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

B. THE OFFENSE:

On or about the date and in the approximate amount set forth below, in the Eastern District of Louisiana and elsewhere, **BENJAMIN TEKIPPE**, during and in relation to a health care fraud offense in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1347, as alleged in Counts 1 through 8 herein, knowingly used or caused to be used, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person, specifically a Blue Cross member's name and unique member identification number, to bill Blue Cross for the following service, which was not provided:

| Count | BCBSLA Member | Purported Date of | Claim Submission | Amount |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| 9 | ██████████ | 9/9/2019 | 10/22/2019 | \$420 |

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A(a)(1).

COUNT 10
(False Statement)

On or about July 22, 2020, in the Eastern District of Louisiana, the defendant, **BENJAMIN TEKIPPE**, did knowingly and willfully make a materially false, fictitious and fraudulent statement and representation, in a matter within the jurisdiction of the executive branch of the Government of the United States, to Special Agents of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to wit: **TEKIPPE** falsely stated he had never written a massage therapy SOAP note for a patient, when in fact, as the defendant then and there well knew, that he had in fact written a massage therapy SOAP note for a patient, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001(a)(2).

NOTICE OF FORFEITURE

1. The allegations of Counts 1-10 of this Indictment are incorporated by reference as though set forth fully herein for the purpose of alleging forfeiture to the United States.

2. As a result of the offenses alleged in Counts 1-10, the defendant, **BENJAMIN TEKIPPE**, shall forfeit to the United States pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(7), any property, real or personal, involved in said offenses, and any property traceable to such property.

3. If any of the above-described property, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:

- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third person;
- c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court;
- d. has been substantially diminished in value; or
- e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be subdivided without difficulty;

the United States shall seek a money judgment and, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), forfeiture of any other property of the defendant up to the value of said property.

A TRUE BILL:



DUANE A. EVANS
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY


KATHRYN MCHUGH
Assistant United States Attorney

New Orleans, Louisiana
September 30, 2021