

Doctor Admits Illegally Dispensing Oxycodone

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Camden, New Jersey - A Pennsauken doctor pleaded guilty today to federal charges for illegally selling prescriptions for oxycodone without a legitimate medical purpose and outside the usual course of professional practice, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

Dr. Pankaj Agrawal, 62, of Winslow, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler to a two-count Information. Judge Kugler continued Agrawal's release on a \$500,000 secured bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for July 10.

Agrawal, who had maintained a practice at Pennsauken Medical Center located in Pennsauken, pleaded guilty to one count each of illegally dispensing oxycodone, in the form of Percocet prescriptions, without a legitimate medical purpose and outside the usual course of professional practice and money laundering.

At his plea hearing, Agrawal admitted that between February 2005 and June 2008, he illegally sold bottles of promethazine cough syrup with codeine and numerous prescriptions for Percocet. Specifically, Agrawal admitted that on four occasions between January 2008 and June 2008, he sold prescriptions for Percocet to an individual, who he later learned was a confidential informant ("CI"), in the names of individuals other than that of the CI. For instance, on June 6, 2008, Agrawal sold prescriptions for Percocet in twelve different names that were provided to him by the CI. During each visit, Agrawal did not treat or examine the CI, he admitted. Furthermore, Agrawal accepted responsibility, as relevant conduct, for the sale of 60 additional prescriptions to the confidential informant or his associates.

Additionally, Agrawal admitted that on June 3, 2008, he deposit into a Beneficial Bank account \$15,000 in cash that represented proceeds from illegally distributing controlled substances.

Agrawal was arrested on a criminal Complaint at his home on June 27, 2008, and later that day had an initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Joel Schneider in federal court in Camden. Following a bail hearing on July 1, 2008, Magistrate Schneider released the defendant on a \$500,000 secured bond.

The unlawful dispensing of controlled dangerous substances charge carries a maximum statutory sentence of 20 years in prison and a fine of the greater of \$1 million or twice the pecuniary gain to the defendant. The money laundering charge carries a maximum statutory sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Kugler will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the DEA's Camden Resident Office and the New Jersey Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer; FBI's South Jersey Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Janice K. Fedarcyk in Philadelphia; and the IRS Criminal Investigation's Paterson Post of Duty, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord in Newark, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Skahill of the Criminal Division in Camden.