



Department of Justice

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Western District of Wisconsin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRAND JURY RETURNS INDICTMENTS

MADISON, WIS. – A federal grand jury in the Western District of Wisconsin, sitting in Madison, returned the following indictments today. You are advised that a charge is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

Two California Women Charged with Health Care Fraud Scheme At Wisconsin Nursing Homes

Lauryn Nelson, 40, San Pedro, California, and Marie De La Torre, 50, Corona, California, are charged with conspiring to commit health care fraud, and De La Torre is also charged with eight additional counts of health care fraud, through a scheme to defraud the Medicare Program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The indictment alleges that the conspiracy operated from February to September 2015.

The indictment alleges that Nelson and De La Torre, both licensed vocational nurses, worked for a company not named in the indictment that did genetic testing of residents in nursing homes to determine how different residents metabolized medication, which might result in changes in medication prescribed to the residents. The indictment alleges that Nelson and De La Torre went into four nursing homes in Wisconsin, located in Milwaukee, Rhinelander, Oshkosh, and Wisconsin Rapids, to do this genetic testing and obtained medical information about residents which they used to create fraudulent wound care supply orders they submitted to Medicare for reimbursement. The indictment alleges that neither Nelson nor De La Torre had any involvement in caring for wounds of the Wisconsin nursing home residents.

The indictment alleges that Nelson and De La Torre directed that fraudulently ordered wound care supplies be shipped to the California office of the company for which they worked, instead of to the Wisconsin nursing homes. The indictment charges that they caused \$552,889 to be billed to Medicare for these wound care supplies, of which Medicare paid \$431,579.

If convicted, Nelson and De La Torre face a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison on Count 1, and De La Torre faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison for the remaining eight counts in the indictment. The charges against them are the result of an investigation by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Zachary J. Corey is handling the prosecution.

Rhineland Man Charged with Attempting to Entice Child

Richard M. Duellman, 42, Rhineland, Wisconsin, is charged with using text messages and telephone calls to persuade an individual who had not attained the age of 18 years to engage in sexual activity that would constitute second degree sexual assault of a child under Wisconsin law. The indictment alleges that he attempted to do so on July 21, 2020.

If convicted, Duellman faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years and a maximum of life in federal prison. The charge against him is the result of an investigation by the Oneida County Sheriff's Office, Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation, and Rhineland Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Elizabeth Altman is handling the prosecution.

Burnett County Man Charged with Possessing Child Pornography

Anthony A. Atkins, 47, Webster, Wisconsin, is charged with possessing child pornography. The indictment alleges that on June 15, 2020, he possessed a cellular phone that contained visual depictions of minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct, and at least one of the depictions involved a minor who had not attained 12 years of age.

If convicted, Atkins faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison. The charge against him is the result of an investigation by the Burnett County Sheriff's Office and the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Elizabeth Altman is handling the prosecution.

Lincoln County Man Charged with Illegally Possessing Firearm

Michael W. Wienandt, 26, Tomahawk, Wisconsin, is charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. The indictment alleges that on May 15, 2020, he possessed a .40 caliber pistol.

If convicted, Wienandt faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison. The charge against him is the result of an investigation by the Marathon County Sheriff's Office, Wausau Police Department, Wisconsin Department of Justice Division

of Criminal Investigation, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert A. Anderson is handling the prosecution.

Beloit Man Charged with Gun Crime

Fabian W. Jones, 28, Beloit, Wisconsin, is charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. The indictment alleges that on March 15, 2020, he possessed a .40 caliber handgun.

If convicted, Jones faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison. The charge against him is the result of an investigation by the Beloit Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant U.S. Attorney Corey C. Stephan is handling the prosecution.

Spoooner Man Charged with Possessing Methamphetamine for Distribution

Brian K. Dennis, 50, Spooner, Wisconsin, is charged with possessing 50 grams or more of methamphetamine with the intent to distribute. The indictment alleges that he possessed the methamphetamine on May 29, 2020.

If convicted, Dennis faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years and a maximum of life in federal prison. The charge against him is the result of an investigation by the Barron and Sawyer County Sheriffs' Offices and the Drug Enforcement Administration. First Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy M. O'Shea is handling the prosecution.

La Crosse Man Charged with Drug Crimes Involving Methamphetamine

Lucas Carpenter, 36, La Crosse, Wisconsin, is charged with possessing methamphetamine with the intent to distribute, and with distributing 50 grams or more of methamphetamine. The indictment alleges that he possessed and distributed methamphetamine on November 15, 2019.

If convicted, Carpenter faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison on the possession with intent to distribute charge, and a mandatory minimum penalty of five years and a maximum of 40 years in federal prison on the distribution of 50 grams or more of methamphetamine charge. The charges against him are the result of an investigation by the Prairie du Chien Police Department and the West Central Metropolitan Enforcement Group. Assistant U.S. Attorney Chadwick M. Elgersma is handling the prosecution.

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