

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

“Compound King” and Two Others Indicted in Multi-Million Dollar Conspiracy

Fugitive Sought

HOUSTON – A man and woman from Houston are set to appear in federal court on charges related to health care fraud and money laundering, announced U.S. Attorney Ryan K. Patrick. Law enforcement are searching for a third individual also indicted in the case.

George Phillip Tompkins, 73, and Marene Kathryn Tompkins, 66, were taken into custody Thursday. They are expected in court for an arraignment and counsel determination hearing before U.S. Magistrate Judge Dena H. Palermo at 10:00 a.m. today.

Authorities are still seeking a third defendant - Anoop Kumar Chaturvedi, 46, a legal permanent resident from India in connection with the charges. A warrant remains outstanding for his arrest. Anyone with information about his whereabouts is asked to contact the U.S. Postal Service – Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG) at 1-888-877-7644.

The three are charged in a 17- count indictment that was returned Jan. 24, 2018, and unsealed Feb. 16, with violating the anti-kickback statute, conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, wire fraud and conspiracy to launder money.

The Tompkins owned Piney Point Pharmacy on Fondren Road in Houston. The indictment alleges they conspired with Chaturvedi and others to induce the referral of compound gel and cream prescriptions to the pharmacy for dispensing and billing under health benefit programs, including the Federal Employees Compensation Act program (FECA).

Beginning around September 2009 and continuing through approximately September 2016, the indictment alleges the trio engaged in health care fraud and wire fraud as well as illegal kickbacks. The pharmacy allegedly billed the Department of Labor (DOL) - who administered the FECA program - at least \$23,392,281 for compound gel and cream medications dispensed pursuant to illegitimate prescriptions and the result of kickback payments. The DOL paid approximately \$11,663,704 on the fraudulent claims. The indictment lists several dates when compound gels and creams were dispensed to hundreds of patients, ordered by the same physician. Chaturvedi allegedly distributed a standardized prescription order form and directed the number of medication refills to be ordered.

The indictment describes compounding as a practice of compounding and creating medications tailored to individual patient needs. George Tompkins was the pharmacist in charge and allegedly referred to himself as the “Compound King.” Marene Tompkins was identified as the pharmacy Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, while Chaturvedi owned several other businesses in the Houston area, according to the charges.

“The indictment obtained today should send a clear message to healthcare providers that the government is vigilant and vigorously protecting federal benefits programs from corruption,” said Special Agent in Charge Christopher Cave of USPS-OIG , Southern Area Field Office. “The USPS-OIG, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to investigate these types of cases in

order to protect the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs and USPS from further fraud and abuse.”

If convicted of the money laundering conspiracy, they face up to 20 years in federal prison. Each also faces up to 10 years in prison for convictions of either conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud and wire fraud as well as a maximum of five years for conspiracy to pay kickbacks.

USPS-OIG, DOL-OIG, IRS-Criminal Investigation, Department of Veterans Affairs – OIG and Department of Homeland Security – OIG conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Julie Redlinger is prosecuting the case.