

PRESS RELEASE

Two Suburban Chicago Physicians Sentenced to Federal Prison for Health Care Fraud

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Illinois

CHICAGO — Two suburban Chicago physicians have been sentenced to federal prison for prescribing opioids to individuals who lacked a legitimate medical need for the drugs.

STANLEY DAVID DEMOREST managed Demorest Consultants LLC, a medical practice in Melrose Park, Ill. NICHOLAS RECCHIA was employed there as a physician. From 2015 to 2020, Demorest and Recchia agreed to dispense hydrocodone, oxycodone, fentanyl, and other controlled substances to individuals who visited Demorest Consultants but whom Demorest and Recchia knew had no legitimate medical need for the drugs. In some instances, Demorest, who voluntarily surrendered his DEA Registration Number in 2015 and lost his ability to lawfully prescribe controlled substances, used Recchia's name and DEA Registration Number to issue prescriptions for controlled substances to patients. Demorest and Recchia caused pharmacies to submit numerous claims to Medicare and Medicaid seeking payment for the improper prescriptions.

Demorest, 67, of Bloomingdale, Ill., pleaded guilty earlier this year to one count of health care fraud and one count of unlawfully using another person's DEA registration number to dispense controlled substances. Recchia, 64, of River Grove, Ill., pleaded guilty earlier this year to one count of health care fraud. Both defendants admitted in plea agreements that they dispensed controlled substances outside the usual course of medical practice and without a legitimate medical purpose. On Dec. 14, 2023, U.S. District Judge John F. Kness sentenced Demorest to two years in federal prison and Recchia to six months in prison.

The sentences were announced by Morris Pasqual, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, Sheila G. Lyons, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Division of the DEA, Robert W. "Wes" Wheeler, Jr., Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago

Field Office of the FBI, Mario Pinto, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, and Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Division of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

“During a time of epidemic prescription opioid abuse, a trained physician is the last person that the public should expect to knowingly and intentionally issue unauthorized prescriptions for opioids,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian Hayes argued in the government’s sentencing memorandum. “Knowing and intentional violations of controlled substances laws by medical professionals during this time must be met with serious sanctions.”

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