

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of New Jersey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Medical Assistant Sentenced to Two Years in Prison for Role in Health Care Fraud Conspiracy

CAMDEN, N.J. – A former medical assistant was sentenced today to 24 months in prison for defrauding New Jersey state and local health benefits programs and other insurers of more than \$1 million by submitting fraudulent claims for medically unnecessary prescriptions, Attorney for the United States Vikas Khanna announced.

Aaron Jones, 28, of Willingboro, New Jersey, pleaded guilty before Judge Robert B. Kugler on March 10, 2022, to one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud. Judge Kugler imposed the sentence today in Camden federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

Jones was previously employed by a medical practice in Stratford, New Jersey, that was owned by Dr. Michael Goldis. Jones was paid by a pharmaceutical sales representative, Richard Zappala, to identify patients at the medical practice who had insurance plans that would cover the compound prescription medications. Jones forged the signature of Goldis on numerous compound medication prescriptions, including on prescriptions for individuals who were not Goldis' patients. Jones also arranged for Goldis to sign prescriptions for the compound medications, regardless of whether or not the individuals receiving the prescriptions had a medical necessity for them. Jones received approximately \$10,000 in cash for his role in the scheme.

Goldis pleaded guilty in June 2020 to four counts of making false statements relating to health care matters; Zappala pleaded guilty in September 2017 to conspiracy to commit health care fraud. Both await sentencing.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Kugler sentenced Jones to three years of supervised release and ordered him to pay \$1.04 million in restitution.

Attorney for the United States Khanna credited special agents of the FBI's Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James E. Dennehy in Newark; special agents of IRS - Criminal Investigation, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Tammy Tomlins in Newark; and the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, New York Region, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone, with the investigation leading to today's sentencing.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christina O. Hud of the Criminal Division and R. David Walk, Jr., Chief of the Opioid Abuse Prevention and Enforcement Unit.

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