

Eli's Rehab Report

NEWS BRIEFS: OIG Slams Mississippi Doctor for PT Fraud

A licensed Mississippi physician was arrested in December for fraudulently billing the federal government \$16 million for in-home physical therapy services, according to the HHS Office of Inspector General. The indictment, filed Dec. 3, 2008, alleges that the doctor received \$7 million in unjustified payments.

Cassandra Faye Thomas, owner and operator of Central MS Physical Medicine, Inc., was charged with conspiracy, healthcare fraud, making false statements, theft of public money, and wire fraud, the OIG reported.

According to the indictment, the so-called physical therapy services were provided in patients' homes by unqualified, inadequately trained, unlicensed technicians with no supervision and then billed as though Dr. Thomas had provided or supervised the services.

This case is part of a larger initiative involving physical therapy practices in Mississippi that is a collaboration between the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi and OIG.

To date, OIG's involvement in the Mississippi Physical Therapy Initiative has resulted in six felony convictions and nearly \$5.7 million in court-ordered restitution in three cases, the agency reported.