

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
DISTRICT *of* COLUMBIA

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District of Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nurse-Practitioner Indicted on Federal Charges, Accused of Illegally Distributing Oxycodone

Defendant Ran Pain Management Practice in Southeast Washington

WASHINGTON - Ivan Lamont Robinson, a licensed nurse practitioner who was based in Southeast Washington, has been indicted on federal charges that he distributed oxycodone outside the legitimate scope of professional practice and without a legitimate medical purpose.

The indictment was announced by U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips; Karl C. Colder, Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Division Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); Nicholas DiGiulio, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG), for the region that includes Washington, D.C.; Robert E. Craig, Jr., Special Agent in Charge of the Mid-Atlantic Field Office of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Robinson, 44, of Washington, D.C., was indicted on June 7, 2016, by a grand jury in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, on a total of 55 felony counts. The indictment became public today, and Robinson is to appear in court at a later date. The case is assigned to the Honorable Colleen Kollar-Kotelly. Each of the 55 counts carries a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$1 million. Under federal sentencing guidelines, the charges carry a potential range of 97 to 121 months in prison.

According to the government's evidence, Robinson conducted a pain management practice from 2011 until 2013 in the 2000 block of Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE. His practice received numerous complaints from civilians in the area and from other health care professionals, including pharmacists, who suspected that he was operating a "pill mill" rather than a medical pain management practice.

Law enforcement executed numerous search warrants involving his practice on June 19, 2013. After a meeting with officials of DEA, he voluntarily relinquished his DEA license, which had authorized him to write prescriptions for controlled substance medication. Under D.C. Board of Health rules, he had been permitted to write prescriptions and treat certain patients without supervision by a licensed physician. The indictment alleges that he wrote 55 prescriptions for various patients. Each patient received the same prescription, that is, 60 tablets of 30 mg oxycodone.

“Pill mill” prosecutions are common in the United States, but this appears to be the first of its kind to be prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia. “Pill mill” is a shorthand terminology for a medical practice which begins selling prescriptions to customers, usually for cash. Pill mill practices are characterized by practitioners who cease treating patients. For example, when a health care professional ceases conducting medical histories of patients, refrains from conducting physical examinations, neglects to keep adequate medical records listing diagnosis and treatment plans, and simply sells patients prescriptions for opioids, like oxycodone, in exchange for cash, then such conduct is not in the usual course of professional practice. In those instances, health care professionals can face prosecution for distribution of controlled substances.

“Doctors and health care professionals have a responsibility to the public to prescribe opioid medications carefully, and when there is a legitimate medical purpose to do so, and not merely to feed someone’s addiction,” said U.S. Attorney Phillips. “Together with our law enforcement partners, we are committed to combatting the problem of opioid abuse.”

“Most health care professionals adhere to strict standards when caring for their patients,” said Special Agent in Charge Colder. “However, in this instance, Mr. Robinson is accused of using his position to prescribe oxycodone for the sole purpose of making money, ultimately putting lives in danger. This indictment, numerous search warrants and subsequent arrest demonstrates that DEA is dedicated to dismantling “pill mill” operations. When prescriptions are obtained through rogue pain management clinics and then sold on the streets, it creates and feeds a new generation of users and addicts. These addicts will continue to abuse the illegal prescriptions, or switch to a cheaper and more potent drug; heroin. DEA would like to thank its law enforcement partners for their diligent efforts to keep the citizens of Washington, D.C. safe.”

“This indictment is part of an ongoing effort by the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) to aggressively investigate allegations of health care fraud that affect the Department of Defense and put its personnel at risk,” said Special Agent in Charge Craig. “DCIS will continue working with our law enforcement partners to make health care fraud an investigative priority.”

According to the Center for Disease Control, in 2011, three-quarters of prescription overdose deaths involved a prescription for an opioid pain reliever, such as oxycodone. While these medicines have a legitimate medical use for alleviating pain, they are in such great demand that opioids and heroin are now the number one drug threat to our region and to the nation. As President Obama pointed out in May 2016, “Drug overdoses now take more lives every year than

traffic accidents. Deaths from opioid overdoses have tripled since 2000. A lot of the time, they're from legal drugs prescribed by a doctor.”

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal laws and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

In announcing the indictment, U.S. Attorney Phillips, Special Agent in Charge Colder, Special Agent in Charge DiGiulio, Special Agent in Charge Craig, and Chief Lanier commended the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys John P. Dominguez and John Han, who are prosecuting the case. They also expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by Paralegal Specialist Jeannette Litz of the U.S. Attorney’s Office. Finally, they acknowledged the work of those who are investigating the case, including Metropolitan Police Department Officer Karen Taylor Arikpo and DEA Drug Diversion Investigator Shirley Powell, both from the DEA’s Tactical Drug Diversion Squad; Special Agent Tracy McFadden of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and Special Agent Nacieve Owens of the Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service.