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SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* TEXAS

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Texas

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Woodlands pain doctor pays half million dollars for fraudulent PPP and billing allegations

HOUSTON - A 49-year-old local physician has agreed to pay \$523,331 to settle allegations he submitted false claims for the placement of electro-acupuncture devices and for making false statements when applying for a loan from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), announced Acting U.S. Attorney Jennifer B. Lowery.

Dr. Emad Bishai is an anesthesiologist and pain management physician who practices in The Woodlands. Woodlands Pain Institute PLLC is his primary practice entity.

From July 12, 2017, to May 10, 2019, Bishai billed the Medicare and TRICARE programs for the surgical implantation of neurostimulator electrodes. These are invasive procedures usually requiring use of an operating room for which Medicare pays thousands of dollars. Neither Bishai nor his staff performed this surgical procedure. Instead, patients received devices used for electro-acupuncture. This only involved inserting needles into patients' ears with the neurostimulator taped behind them with an adhesive.

In addition to the financial settlement, Bishai and Woodlands Pain Institute PLLC have agreed to a seven-year-period of exclusion from participation in any federal health care programs.

To date, the Southern District of Texas has resolved five similar cases, which included settlements from a [Katy anesthesiologist](#), a [Houston pain doctor](#), a [Rockport chiropractor](#), a [Houston chiropractor](#), and a [Laredo pain doctor](#).

In addition to his false medical claims, Bishai allegedly made false statements when submitting an application to the PPP program in May 2020 on behalf of Woodlands Pain Institute PLLC. Specifically, the application included a question whether the applicant (or any individual owning more than 20% equity) is subject to an indictment, criminal information, arraignment or other means by which formal criminal charges are brought in any jurisdiction.

Bishai is 100% owner of Woodlands Pain Institute PLLC. When filling out the application, he falsely checked the box marked "No" and initialed his name beneath the question. However, at the time of the application, Bishai was facing criminal charges in Montgomery County arising from his practice of prescribing opioid medicines. As a result of his fraudulent application, Bishai received a loan to which he was not entitled.

The Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Inspector General and Defense Criminal Investigation Service conducted the investigation with the assistance of Qlarant, the Unified Program Integrity Contractor for Medicare. Assistant U.S. Attorney Brad Gray handled the matter.

The claims resolved by the settlement are allegations only and there has been no determination of liability.

Topic(s):
Financial Fraud
Health Care Fraud

Component(s):
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