



*Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Kentucky
Kerry B. Harvey, United States Attorney*

London Physician Pleads Guilty to Health Care Fraud Charges in First Case of its Kind in Kentucky

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Defendant is the Third Cardiologist Nationwide to be Criminally Prosecuted for Health Care Fraud Related to the Placement of Heart Stents

FRANKFORT — A London, Ky., cardiologist pleaded guilty to charges that he falsely recorded the severity of patients' illnesses in order to receive payment for numerous heart procedures.

Sandesh Rajaram Patil, 51, a former cardiologist at St. Joseph's Hospital in London, admitted Tuesday in Frankfort to making false statements regarding the placement of heart stents. Stents are metal tubes surgically inserted into a patient's arteries in order to improve blood flow.

Patil reached an agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office to serve a prison term between 30 and 37 months, pending a judge's approval. Patil is scheduled for sentencing on August 27, 2013. St Joseph's hospital has repaid the government \$256,800 for cardiac stent procedures that Patil falsely submitted for reimbursement in 2009 and 2010.

Patil is the third cardiologist in the nation, and the first in Kentucky, to be federally prosecuted for health care fraud related to the placement of heart stents.

"Dr. Patil violated the public's trust in physicians," said Kerry B. Harvey, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Both patients and the entities that pay for medical services trust that our physicians will accurately and honestly assess a patient's medical condition. We will aggressively pursue any physician or provider that breaches this trust and places their own financial well-being ahead of the well-being of the patients."

Under federal law, Medicare and Medicaid reimburse physicians for procedures that are deemed medically necessary. For a cardiac stent procedure to qualify as a medical necessity, it is generally accepted that a patient must have at least 70 percent

blockage of an artery and symptoms of blockage. Patil admitted that he placed stents in arteries that had substantially less than 70 percent blockage. Patil nonetheless recorded blockage of 70 percent or more in patient documents to guarantee payment from Medicare and Medicaid.

Kerry B. Harvey, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Perrye Turner, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Jack Conway, Kentucky Attorney General, jointly announced the plea.

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Kentucky Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Abuse and Control Unit, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

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