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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THREE SOUTH FLORIDA MEN PLEAD
GUILTY TO MEDICARE FRAUD**

SAVANNAH, GA: Edmund A. Booth, Jr., United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that three South Florida men have entered guilty pleas in U.S. District Court in Savannah before Chief U.S. District Judge William T. Moore, Jr. Ricardo R. Visbal-Iglesias, age 29, Michael Visbal, age 29, and Fernando Enrique Visbal, age 32, all from Miami, Florida and citizens of Colombia, pled guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud and to pay Illegal Kickbacks in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371 in connection with a scheme to defraud Medicare by billing for phony infusion services which were never provided.

At the guilty plea hearings, the Government established through the evidence that in September, 2007, the Defendants opened a business in Savannah called "Savannah Medical Services." The Defendants then began recruiting indigent Medicare beneficiaries from the Savannah area who were paid cash by the Defendants in exchange for their Medicare information. The Visbals, through Savannah Medical Services, then submitted bills to Medicare for fictitious infusion services on behalf of the recruited Medicare patients. Infusion services,

when properly performed, are used to treat patients with immuno-compromised conditions such as AIDS and cancer.

The Visbals will be sentenced upon the completion of a pre-sentence investigation report. The offense for which they have been convicted carries a maximum statutory penalty of five (5) years imprisonment, three (3) years supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. A sentencing date has not been set. The Visbals remain in federal custody pending their sentencing.

Booth stated that “law enforcement nationwide are targeting phony infusion clinics and that such illegal activity in this District will be quickly investigated and prosecuted. The government is committed to combating health care fraud and abuse in our community.”

Booth praised the work of agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Health and Human Services who investigated the case. The government is being represented by Assistant United States Attorney Brian McEvoy.

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