



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

08/10/06

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan/>

CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

SEVEN INDICTED, INCLUDING FIVE DOCTORS, IN \$75 MILLION INTERNET PRESCRIPTION DRUG RING

Doctors Helped Business Illegally Distribute Controlled Substances and Prescription Drugs

ATLANTA, GA - CHRISTOPHER STOUFFLET, 38, of Woodstock, Georgia; TROY SOBERT, 36, of Anderson, South Carolina; VLADIMIR ANDRIES, M.D., 60, of Montgomery, New York; THU ANH HOANG, M.D., 38, of Lewisville, Texas; STEVEN DANIEL HOLLIS, M.D., 59, of Columbus, Georgia; AHSAN U. RASHID, 56, of Irvine, California; and ANDRE D. SMITH, 42, of Lansing, Michigan, have been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances. STOUFFLET, SOBERT, ANDRIES, and SMITH also face federal charges of unlawful distribution and dispensing of controlled substances. In addition, STOUFFLET and SOBERT face federal charges of conspiracy to launder money, promotional money laundering, transactional money laundering, and dealing in misbranded drugs held for sale after shipment in interstate commerce. STOUFFLET and SOBERT were arraigned today on the charges before United States Magistrate Judge C. Christopher Hagy in Atlanta.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "These defendants, particularly the doctors charged, allegedly chose Internet profits over legal and ethical medical practices. The indictment alleges that they abused their medical licenses, clicking a mouse instead of diagnosing actual patients. They flooded the Internet with hundreds of thousands of prescription drug pills made available to anyone willing to pay."

According to Nahmias and the documents and information presented in court: STOUFFLET and SOBERT were two of the owners of businesses including "escripts-md.com," "myemd.com," "Lifespan," and "Virtual Wellness Networks," based in Marietta, Georgia. These businesses sought customers who would request specific controlled substances and prescription drugs. The businesses forwarded these requests to doctors who would click electronic prescriptions causing the drugs to be sent to the customers. The doctors allegedly never met the customers, nor would they typically even speak to the customers over the telephone. Thus, customers were able to obtain

controlled substances and prescription drugs without any genuine medical need and outside of a legitimate doctor-patient relationship. Drugs listed in the indictment include Phentermine, Adipex-P, Meridia, Bontril, and Viagra.

The indictment alleges that as part of the scheme, Dr. ANDRIES dispensed at least 33,400 prescriptions in a 14 month period, including at least 18,500 prescriptions for controlled substances. Dr. HOANG allegedly dispensed at least 16,500 prescriptions in a 6 month period, including over 7,000 prescriptions for controlled substances. Dr. HOLLIS allegedly dispensed at least 43,490 prescriptions, including over 26,000 for controlled substances, in a 13 month period. Dr. RASHID allegedly dispensed at least 12,000 prescriptions, including at least 8,000 for controlled substances, in a 5 month period. Finally, in a 20 month period, Dr. SMITH allegedly dispensed at least 65,000 prescriptions, over 40,000 of which were for controlled substances.

The Defendants were indicted by a federal grand jury on August 8, 2006. According to the Indictment, STOUFFLET and SOBERT obtained at least \$75 million in proceeds as a result of the conspiracy. The indictment contains a forfeiture provision in which the government seeks to forfeit all proceeds of illegal products and criminal activity. SOBERT appeared this morning before a federal magistrate and was ordered to post a \$10,000 cash bond.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Food and Drug Administration.

Assistant United States Attorneys Randy S. Chartash and Lawrence R. Sommerfeld are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.