



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Robert Pitman, U.S. Attorney

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**FORMER TEXAS PAIN MANAGEMENT PHYSICIAN AND PSYCHIATRIST
SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON ON HEALTH CARE FRAUD CHARGES**

United States Attorney Robert Pitman announced that in El Paso today, 57-year-old Anthony Francis Valdez was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison followed by three years of supervised release in connection with an estimated \$42 million fraudulent health care benefit program billing scheme. Valdez, a former physician, was the owner of the Institute of Pain Management with clinics in El Paso and San Antonio.

“Valdez preyed on the most vulnerable members of our society--the poor, the disabled and the elderly. In doing so, he sought to enrich himself by billing health care entitlement programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid and Tri-Care, of more than \$42 million during a five (5) year period for services he did not perform. As a result, Valdez has lost his medical license, his reputation, his property and most of all his freedom. We hope his sentence of 25 years serves as a deterrence to others who would contemplate defrauding these federally funded health care programs,” stated United States Attorney Robert Pitman.

In addition, Senior United States District Judge David Briones ordered that Valdez pay \$13,356,645.44 restitution; and, forfeit more than \$1.7 million in cash, his residence in El Paso, his residence in San Antonio as well as five vehicles. Judge Briones also handed down a monetary judgement against Valdez for \$9,741,649.

“Today's sentencing of Anthony Valdez represents the FBI's commitment to investigating threats associated with Health Care Fraud in the El Paso area and prosecuting those individuals responsible for defrauding Government and private health care benefit programs. It was through the dedication and hard work of the Special Agents and Professional Support staff of the El Paso FBI as well as several other State, Local and Federal Agencies, that this investigation was successfully completed,” stated Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Mark Morgan, El Paso Division.

On July 1, 2011, Valdez was convicted by a jury of one count conspiracy to commit Health Care Fraud, six counts of Health Care Fraud, six counts of false statements related to health care matters and three counts of money laundering. Evidence during trial revealed that beginning in January 2005 and continuing through December 2009, Valdez caused fraudulent claims to be submitted to Medicare, Medicaid, and TRICARE for procedures which he did not perform or were non-reimbursable.

“These kinds of criminals, like Anthony Valdez, hurt the very nature of our health care system by falsely inflating the cost of health care for all of us. Valdez's punishment is well justified and will serve as a warning to other unscrupulous health care professionals,” stated Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Steve McCullough.

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This case was investigated by agents with Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Defense Criminal Investigative Service-Southwest Field Office together with the Texas Attorney General's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys William F. Lewis, Jr., and Juanita Fielden prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government.

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