



# Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Texas

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## Local Doctor Gets 11+ Years in Health Care Fraud Scheme

HOUSTON – Houston doctor Christina Joy Clardy, **61**, has been sentenced to 135 months in federal prison for her role in a massive health care fraud conspiracy that billed the federal Medicare and Texas Medicaid programs for \$45,039,230 over a 2 ½-year-period, United States Attorney Kenneth Magidson announced today. Clardy was sentenced just a short while ago in federal court in Houston.

Clardy is the third defendant to be sentenced in this matter. Last week Umawa Oke Imo, the owner of City Nursing Services of Texas, Inc., was sentenced to 327 months for his role in the conspiracy and health care fraud. Clardy, who was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud, 14 counts of health care fraud and three counts of mail fraud on May 27, 2011, after an 18-day trial in front of U.S. District Judge Melinda Harmon, was also ordered to pay \$15,626,084.01 in restitution to Medicare and Medicaid. In arriving at Clardy's sentence today, Judge Harmon considered the pivotal role Clardy played in abusing the trust of the Medicare and Medicaid programs by allowing the fraudulent billing under her provider numbers.

City Nursing billed more than \$25 million worth of physical therapy services under Clardy's physician provider numbers between January 2007 and August 2008. The United States introduced a letter at trial, sent by Clardy to Imo in July of 2007 - a year before she left the clinic, showing her knowledge of the fraudulent activities at the clinic, ordering Imo to immediately cease billing Medicare under her provider number, to notify Medicare of the prior fraudulent billing and threatening to notify Medicare of the fraud if he did not. Clardy testified at trial that after Imo received her letter they had a private meeting at her house and after that she never contacted Medicare about the fraud and never asked Imo if he contacted Medicare or stopped the fraudulent billing. Other evidence introduced by the United States showed that beginning in August 2007, a few weeks after Clardy's letter, Imo began making large cash payments to Clardy and continued to bill approximately \$21 million worth of false and fraudulent physical therapy services.

City Nursing employee Joann Michelle White, who played a minor role in the health care fraud conspiracy, pleaded guilty to conspiracy in February 2010 and testified for the United States during the trial. She was sentenced to 46 months on Oct. 14, 2011. The last convicted defendant, Kenneth Anokam, will be sentenced later next month.

The investigation into City Nursing was the result of the joint efforts by special agents of the FBI, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations, the Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General and the Texas Attorney General's Office-Medicare Fraud Control Unit. Assistant United States Attorneys Julie Redlinger and Mark Donnelly prosecuted the case. Assistant United States Attorney Kristine Rollinson assisted with forfeiture and restitution.

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