

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Department of Defense (DoD), announced today that on July 19, 2001, HealthWise Medical Rehabilitation Centers (HealthWise), Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, VA, and Michael J. Concessi, Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) and owner/operator of HealthWise, were each found guilty of a single count of health care fraud and 23 counts of false statements relating to health care matters, following a jury trial in U.S. District Court, Norfolk, VA, before the Honorable Raymond A. Jackson.

On April 25, 2001, Concessi and Healthwise were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for the U.S. District Court, Norfolk, VA, on charges relating to the submission of numerous fraudulent health care claims for payment to TRICARE and the TRIGON Insurance Company. TRICARE is the DoD health benefits program that helps pay the medical bills of active duty members, military dependents, retirees, and other specified individuals who receive medical care from civilian health care providers. The claims submitted to TRICARE and TRIGON falsely depicted the provider of services and were for services not eligible for payment. The criminal information was the result of an undercover investigation.

HealthWise is a multidiscipline practice that employs medical doctors and doctors of osteopathy on a contractual basis. These doctors give initial medical exams to patients prior to receiving chiropractic services performed by Concessi. The claim is then submitted under the medical doctor's name and provider identification number to TRICARE and other insurance programs. Chiropractic services are not covered benefits under the TRICARE program. The loss to the Government was \$90,000.

The charges carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for the health care fraud count and 5 years in prison and \$250,000 per false statement count. Sentencing in this matter is scheduled for October 19, 2001.