

Madison, Wisconsin -- J.B. Van Hollen, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Rufino E. Buyao of Tayug, Pangasinan, Republic of the Philippines, DOB: 08/04/1941, was sentenced yesterday by United States District Judge Barbara Crabb to 14 months in prison and three years of supervised release. Buyao was also ordered to pay \$132,390.72 in restitution for his part in a scheme to defraud TRICARE. TRICARE, formerly known as CHAMPUS, is the Department of Defense's worldwide health care program for active duty and retired uniformed services members and their families.

The defendant's conviction stems from an on-going criminal investigation of TRICARE fraud in the Republic of the Philippines. In the defendant's case, he filed false claims for medical benefits from TRICARE, claiming he had been hospitalized at a clinic in the Philippines and had received various medical services. Contrary to the representations in the claims, the hospitalization and medical services described in the claims had not been provided to the defendant. The charges were brought in the Western District of Wisconsin because Wisconsin Physicians Service, the fiscal intermediary which processed and paid these alleged false claims, is located in the Western District of Wisconsin.

To date, seventeen people have been convicted of TRICARE fraud in the Western District of Wisconsin and given sentences ranging from 3 months to 14 months in prison. The court has ordered these defendants to pay a total of \$1,792,925.51. In such cases, where the defendant is a United States military retiree, their pension can be garnished to assist in the collection of money owed to the government.