

**Department of Justice**
Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2013

Beaumont Orthodontist Guilty Of Health Care Fraud Violations

BEAUMONT, Texas – A 70-year-old Beaumont orthodontist has pleaded guilty to health care fraud violations in the Eastern District of Texas, announced U.S. Attorney John M. Bales today.

Terrence Ewing Syler pleaded guilty to an Information charging him with health care fraud today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Keith Giblin.

According to the information presented in court, Syler owned and operated Syler Orthodontics in Beaumont. From January 2007 to October 2012, Syler carried out a scheme to defraud Medicaid by submitting claims for palatal expanders which were never provided to his patients. As a result of the scheme, Syler received \$829,333 to which he was not entitled. As part of his plea agreement, Syler has agreed to forfeiture of several bank accounts totaling just over \$829,000.

Syler faces up to 10 years in federal prison at sentencing. A sentencing date has not been set.

The Texas Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) is a health care benefit program, jointly funded by the State of Texas and the federal government, and helps pay for reasonable and necessary medical procedures and services provided to individuals who are deemed eligible under state low-income programs.

This case is being investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office of the Inspector General (HHS-OIG) and the Texas Office of the Attorney General – Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (OAG-MFCU). Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher T. Tortorice is prosecuting this case.

Any individuals with knowledge of these or other health care fraud violations are encouraged to contact the Department of Health and Human Services' fraud hotline at 1-800-HHS-TIPS (447-8477).

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