

N E W S L I N E

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DWC Suspends Nine Medical Providers for Fraud

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has suspended nine more medical providers from participating in California's workers' compensation system, bringing the total number of providers suspended this year to 94. The providers were suspended for fraud or other criminal actions.

DWC Administrative Director George Parisotto [issued suspension orders](#) against the following providers:

- Sathish Narayanappa Babu of Bolingbrook, Illinois, physician, was convicted on federal charges of Medicare fraud and of fraudulently obtaining controlled substances in February 2015. The Medical Board of California has revoked his medical license.
- Uche Chukwudi of Gardena, physician, was indicted in 2013 in federal court on felony conspiracy and health care fraud charges for defrauding Medicare in a scheme involving durable medical equipment (DME) provider Adeline Ekwebelem, Uche Chukwudi, Charles Okoye and others. He failed to appear at pre-trial proceedings and was declared a fugitive. The Medical Board of California revoked his license in 2017.
- Charles Ikechukwu Okoye of Carson, physician, was convicted in federal court for conspiracy to commit health care fraud for defrauding Medicare in a scheme involving DME provider Adeline Ekwebelem, Uche Chukwudi and others in 2014. Okoye surrendered his physician's and surgeon's certificate in 2015.
- Adeline Ekwebelem of Gardena, DME provider who worked with Uche Chukwudi, Charles Okoye and others, was convicted in federal court on multiple counts of health care fraud, conspiracy and illegal kickbacks for patient referrals in 2014.
- Victoria Kim of Los Angeles, physician, pled guilty in federal court on a felony charge of receiving illegal kickbacks for home health care referrals. The Medical Board of California revoked her medical license in 2016.
- Daria Renee Million of Corona, registered nurse, pled guilty in Riverside County in May 2015 to DUI and in December 2015 to misdemeanor child endangerment. The California Board of Registered Nursing revoked her license in 2016.
- The following providers participated in an illegal kickback scheme to issue medically-unnecessary DME prescriptions to Medicare patients:

- Victoria Onyeabor of Ontario, DME provider and former owner of Fendih Medical Supplies Inc., was convicted in federal court for conspiracy to commit health care fraud in 2012 for submitting false and fraudulent claims to Medicare.
- Godwin Onyeabor of Ontario, DME provider and corporate officer of Fendih Medical Supplies Inc., was convicted in federal court in 2013 for conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, and conspiracy to pay and receive health care kickbacks.
- Sri Jayantha Wijegunaratne of Anaheim Hills, physician, was convicted in federal court in 2013 for conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, and conspiracy to pay and receive health care kickbacks. His medical license was revoked in 2016.

AB 1244, which went into effect January 1, requires DWC's Administrative Director to suspend any medical provider, physician or practitioner from participating in the workers' compensation system in cases in which one or more of the following is true:

- The provider has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving fraud or abuse of the Medi-Cal or Medicare programs or the workers' compensation system, fraud or abuse of a patient, or related types of misconduct;
- The provider has been suspended due to fraud or abuse from the Medicare or Medicaid (including Medi-Cal) programs; or
- The provider's license or certificate to provide health care has been surrendered or revoked.

The Department of Industrial Relation's (DIR's) [fraud prevention efforts](#) are posted online, including frequently updated lists for physicians, practitioners, and providers who have been issued [notices of suspension](#), and those who have been [suspended pursuant to Labor Code §139.21\(a\)\(1\)](#). The department recently added a new web page with information on [lien consolidations and the Special Adjudication Unit](#).

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