



# Department of Justice

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Southern District of Mississippi

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## MISSISSIPPI DOCTOR CONVICTED OF HEALTH CARE FRAUD

Jackson, Miss. - Cassandra Faye Thomas, of Jackson, Mississippi, was convicted by a jury on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011, of two counts of Health Care Fraud, four counts of Wire Fraud, two counts of Making False Statements Related to Health Care, Theft of Government Funds and Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud, U.S. Attorney John M. Dowdy, Jr. announced. Thomas was placed on home confinement pending sentencing. She is currently the owner of Central Jackson Family Medical Clinic.

The evidence at trial showed that Thomas owned Central Mississippi Physical Medicine Group, Inc., which had offices in Flora and Yazoo City, Mississippi. Central Mississippi Physical Medicine Group claimed to provide physical therapy services to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries in their homes, free of charge to the beneficiary. Thomas submitted claims to Medicare and Medicaid, which represented that the therapy services had either been provided by a doctor, were provided under the doctors direct supervision, or were provided by a licensed physical therapist. The evidence at trial showed that none of the services that were billed to Medicare and Medicaid were provided or supervised by a doctor, or by a licensed physical therapist. Instead, the therapy services were provided by employees of Central Mississippi Physical Medicine Group, none of which were trained or licensed physical therapists. In fact, most of the employees of Central Mississippi Physical Medicine Group, had little or no medical training at all. From March, 2002, until September, 2004, Thomas billed Medicare and Medicaid for false claims of more than \$12,000,000.00, and was paid more than \$6,900,000.00.

Frank Wiley, who was previously convicted for his role in a similar company called Mississippi Central Rehab, testified during the trial.

“We will aggressively continue to pursue fraud in entitlement programs, especially Medicare and Medicaid. At a time when the federal government is faced with a serious financial crisis, fraud like this only adds to the strain. When people try to take advantage of these programs and commit almost \$7 million in fraud, the taxpayers are the ones who bear the burden and it must be stopped,” said U.S. Attorney Dowdy.

Thomas will be sentenced on June 27, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. by U.S. District Judge Daniel P. Jordan, III, in Jackson. She faces up to 125 years in prison and \$2,500,000 in fines, as well as the forfeiture of over \$2,100,000.00 in cash, which was seized from Central Mississippi Physical Medicine Group bank accounts during the investigation. Thomas will also be forced to pay restitution.

The case was investigated by the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant U. S. Attorney Scott Gilbert and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Treasure Tyson, of the Mississippi Attorney General's Office Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, prosecuted the case on behalf of the United States.

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