



U. S. Department of Justice

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PANAMA CITY PHYSICIAN PAYS \$225,000 TO SETTLE ALLEGATIONS THAT HE OVERPRESCRIBED CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Dr. George Barrio, a pain management physician who formerly practiced medicine at the NeuroMedical Institute in Panama City, agreed to pay \$225,000 to resolve allegations that he unlawfully prescribed opioids and other controlled substances to patients. The settlement was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

“We are holding physicians accountable for disregarding patient safety and violating federal law when they write prescriptions that lack a legitimate medical purpose,” said U.S. Attorney Coody. “Their actions not only violate the Controlled Substance Act but contribute to the opioid epidemic ravaging our communities. With our law enforcement partners, we remain committed to combating this epidemic at all levels. This settlement and the associated surrender of the physician’s DEA controlled substance registration are evidence of our resolve.”

The government alleged that Dr. Barrio wrote prescriptions that lacked a legitimate purpose and were issued outside the usual course of professional practice, in violation of the Controlled Substances Act. In addition to payment of the \$225,000 monetary fine, Dr. Barrio also agreed to surrender his DEA registration for Schedule II and IIN controlled substances.

“One of DEA’s most important missions is to ensure physicians comply with the federal laws and regulations set forth in the Controlled Substance Act. Failing to comply with these laws increases the potential for the diversion of controlled substances, which puts the safety and health of our communities at risk,” said DEA Miami Field Division Special Agent in Charge Deanne L. Reuter. “The DEA remains committed to working with our local, state, and federal partners to ensure DEA registrants follow these laws and regulations.”

This civil settlement agreement is not an admission of any liability by Dr. Barrio, nor a concession by the United States that its potential claims were not well-founded.

Assistant United States Attorneys Mary Ann Couch, Kathryn Drey, and Marie Moyle represented the United States in this matter, which was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (Diversion Control Program), Bay County Sherriff's Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and United States Department of Health and Human Services.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation's principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](#) website. For more information about the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Florida, visit <http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html>.

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