

Metro East Dentist Pleads Guilty to Health Care Fraud

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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BENTON - A St. Louis-area dentist has entered a guilty plea to defrauding Illinois Medicaid out of hundreds of thousands of dollars over a period of several years. Dr. Yun Sup Kim, 48, of St. Louis, appeared at the federal courthouse in Benton, Illinois, on Thursday and admitted his guilt on three counts of health care fraud.

The United States has agreed to dismiss a wire fraud charge and nine other health care fraud counts at sentencing. The case against Kim concerns claims he submitted to Illinois Medicaid in connection with his dental practice in Swansea, Illinois.

In pleading guilty, Kim admitted that from August 2014 through December 2017, he repeatedly submitted false bills for cavity fillings and surgical tooth extractions. Court records list over 1,300 patients for whom Kim falsely claimed to have performed eight

or more cavity fillings in a single day. Kim conceded in court that he did not actually numb, drill, and fill cavities in those teeth. Kim further admitted billing simple extractions to Medicaid as if they had been surgical extractions, which are more expensive.

Kim also confessed that he falsified dates of service on numerous occasions to evade Medicaid billing rules for dental sealants.

As part of his plea deal with the United States, Kim has agreed to the entry of a consent decree revoking his license to practice dentistry in Illinois. He will be eligible to petition the licensing board for reinstatement after three years. Kim has also agreed to pay back \$719,830.72 in restitution to Illinois Medicaid and Medicaid managed care organizations. In exchange for these concessions, the United States has agreed to recommend three years of probation and no fine.

The ultimate sentence Kim receives will be determined by United States District Judge Staci M. Yandle. Each count of health care fraud is punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing is set for June 4, 2020.

The investigation was conducted by the Illinois State Police Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Inspector General, and the FBI.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan D. Stump is prosecuting the case.