



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

**EIGHT THERAPISTS ARRESTED IN SCHEME TO DEFRAUD
PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN**

**Defendants Allegedly Defrauded the New York State Early Intervention Program Out of More
Than \$600,000 Through Fraudulent Billing for Therapy Sessions that Never Occurred**

A criminal complaint was unsealed today in federal court in Brooklyn charging Kaderrah Doyle, Cara Steinberg, Marina Golfo, Ego Onaga, Lyubov Beylina, Danielle Scopinich, Patricia Hakim and Enock Mensah with stealing more than \$600,000 in funds from Medicaid and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene through fraudulent billing practices in connection with the New York State Early Intervention Program (EIP). The EIP is a New York State program that provides remedial services to developmentally delayed children from birth to age three. The defendants, all EIP therapists, were arrested earlier today and are scheduled to make their initial appearance this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Sanket J. Bulsara.

Richard P. Donoghue, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), and Mark G. Peters, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced the charges.

“As alleged in the complaint, the defendants defrauded government agencies out of hundreds of thousands of dollars in public funds designated for therapeutic care for developmentally disabled children.” stated United States Attorney Donoghue. “The victims of this fraud include not only the children and their families who were deprived of the therapeutic care that these defendants claimed to have performed, but ultimately the taxpayers whose taxes support Medicaid. This Office and our law enforcement partners are committed to ensuring that those who defraud benefit programs will be held accountable.” Mr. Donoghue also expressed his appreciation to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for its assistance during the investigation.

“As we allege today, these defendants stole hundreds of thousands of government dollars from a program designed to aid some of our city’s most vulnerable residents,” stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. “Rather than provide honest services, they chose to line their own pockets at the expense of taxpayers and the developmentally-delayed children and their families for whom these funds were targeted. Today’s arrests should serve as a reminder that the FBI will continue to be vigilant in our effort to root out fraud and abuse in programs intended to serve the public when these programs are corrupted by greed.”

“These eight therapists shamefully benefited by stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars in public funds while developmentally disabled and delayed children in their care were denied thousands of crucial therapy sessions, according to the charges,” stated DOI Commissioner Peters. “DOI thanks the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York for its prosecution of these crimes.”

According to the complaint, between approximately 2012 and 2018, the defendants submitted thousands of fraudulent session notes and accompanying invoices for non-existent EIP therapy sessions. As a direct result of their fraudulent submissions, the defendants received hundreds of thousands of dollars in reimbursements from Medicaid and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. On many occasions, the defendants were not present at the place where the therapy sessions supposedly occurred, including instances in which they were outside of New York State or even outside of the United States. For example, Beylina allegedly submitted approximately 51 fraudulent invoices for EIP therapy sessions that purportedly occurred when she was in the Dominican Republic. On other occasions, the defendants submitted documentation containing the forged signatures of the children’s caretakers, including parents, guardians, teachers and daycare providers. In other instances, the defendants falsely claimed to have performed EIP therapy sessions for two different children at two different locations at the exact same time. Many of the defendants also falsely claimed to have performed EIP therapy sessions when they were, in fact, at work elsewhere, including as full-time teachers with the New York City Department of Education.

The charges in the complaint are allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

If convicted, the defendants face a statutory maximum of 10 years’ imprisonment.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Ryan Harris and Erin Reid are in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendants:

KADERRAH DOYLE

Age: 41

Bronx, New York

CARA STEINBERG

Age: 40

Old Bridge, New Jersey

MARINA GOLFO

Age: 44

North Pelham, New York

EGO ONAGA

Age: 45

Staten Island, New York

LYUBOV BEYLINA

Age: 30

Brooklyn, New York

DANIELLE SCOPINICH

Age: 35

Ozone Park, New York

PATRICIA HAKIM

Age: 54

Forest Hills, New York

ENOCK MENSAH

Age: 58

Mount Olive, New Jersey

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 18-MJ-927