

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Department of Defense (DoD), announced today that on November 14, 2001, HealthWise Medical Rehabilitation Centers (HealthWise), Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, VA, and Michael J. Concessi, Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) and owner/operator of HealthWise, were sentenced in U.S. District Court, Norfolk, VA.

Dr. Concessi was sentenced to 30 months incarceration for a single count of health care fraud and 30 months incarceration for 23 counts of false claims related to health care fraud. Both periods of imprisonment are to run concurrently. Dr. Concessi was then sentenced to three years supervised probation, ordered to perform 500 hours of community service, pay a \$2,400 special assessment fee (\$100 per count), a \$25,000 fine and make restitution of \$87,379.22, of which \$51,384.53 is payable to TRICARE and \$35,994.69 to the TRIGON Insurance Company. HealthWise was sentenced to three years probation, which included a mandatory institution of a fraud prevention program, payment of a \$9,600 special assessment (\$400 per count) and a \$158,000 fine. TRICARE is a federally funded, statutory health benefits entitlement program for active duty members of the uniformed Services and their family, survivors, and retirees.

On July 24, 2001, both Dr. Concessi and HealthWise were each found guilty on all 24 counts following a jury trial in U.S. District Court, Norfolk, VA. On April 25, 2001, Dr. Concessi and HealthWise were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury on the above charges relating to the submission of numerous fraudulent health care claims for payment to TRICARE and the TRIGON. The claims submitted to TRICARE and TRIGON falsely depicted the provider of services and were for services not eligible for payment.

HealthWise is a multidiscipline (MD/DC) practice that employs medical doctors on a contractual basis to give initial medical exams to patients prior to receiving chiropractic services that were performed by Dr. Concessi and billed under the medical doctor's provider identification number to TRICARE and other insurance programs. Chiropractic services are not covered benefits under the TRICARE program.