

GUILTY VERDICT: On August 9, 2005, Mohammadali Abolahrar, 34, and Reza Abolahrar, 36, were found guilty of conspiracy and 20 counts of health care fraud. The two brothers from Rancho Palos Verdes, CA were convicted today of federal health care fraud charges for billing two government health insurance programs, identified as Medi-Cal and TRICARE for drugs their pharmacies never dispensed . TRICARE is the federal health insurance program for military service members and their dependents.

The 21 charges in the indictment were based on the Abolahrars' operation of two pharmacies, Bayview Pharmacy in Redondo Beach, CA which they owned and operated from about 1995 until 1998, and Roxbury Pharmacy, near Beverly Hills, CA which they owned and operated from 1998 through 2001. The evidence presented during a 4-week trial showed that the pharmacies billed Medi-Cal and TRICARE for prescription drugs that they did not provide.

The two pharmacies received a large amount of business from the liver transplant unit at the UCLA Medical Center, which would fax prescriptions to the pharmacies on behalf of liver transplant patients. Over time, the amount of medication a patient would need would decrease. The pharmacies provided that lesser amount to the liver transplant patients, but they often would bill Medi-Cal and TRICARE for a larger amount. Defendants also billed the programs for drugs not prescribed to patients, and for drugs that had been discontinued by the doctors.

During the course of the scheme, defendants billed and received at least \$250,000 from the Medi-Cal and TRICARE for medications that they did not dispense to liver transplant patients.

The Abolahrars are scheduled to be sentenced on December 5 by United States District Judge The Abolahrars are scheduled to be sentenced on December 5 by United States District Judge Dale S. Fischer. At sentencing, the Abolahrars each face a maximum possible sentence of 205 years in federal prison. This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the investigating arm of the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Defense; and the Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse of the California Department of Justice. Both defendants are also likely to face deportation to Iran after completing their

sentences. Reza Abolahrar is a naturalized American citizen, but because the crime pre-dated his naturalization, he faces "de-naturalization" proceedings, which would be followed by deportation. His brother is not an American citizen, and so also is likely to be deported after serving his prison sentence