

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**

MICHAEL W. REAP
Acting United States Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

For further information call (314) 539-2200

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For Immediate Release

**LOCAL OTOLARYNGOLOGIST INDICTED ON FEDERAL HEALTH CARE FRAUD
CHARGES**

St. Louis, MO: Dr. Wallace P. Berkowitz has been indicted on multiple federal charges involving health care fraud, Acting United States Attorney Michael W. Reap announced today.

According to the indictment, Dr. Berkowitz is an otolaryngologist, specializing in ear, nose and throat problems. He is a sole practitioner with offices in St. Louis City and County, and in Swansea, Alton and Glen Carbon, Illinois.

The indictment alleges that between 2003 and 2008, Dr. Berkowitz submitted numerous claims and received payment from Medicare and Medicaid for health care services that he did not provide at St. Alexius Senior Services Center. Residents of nursing homes and other residential facilities were transported to St. Alexius to receive health services from various providers, including Dr. Berkowitz. Dr. Berkowitz is charged in the indictment with falsely stating in claim forms that he spent 25 to 45 minutes examining and treating each patient when St. Alexius records document that he typically spent less than five minutes with each patient. The indictment also alleges that Dr. Berkowitz falsely claimed that he had removed a foreign body from patients' ears under anesthesia, when he actually had only removed impacted ear wax and that he had performed other surgical procedures that he did not perform.

DR. WALLACE P. BERKOWITZ, St. Louis, was indicted by a federal grand jury on one felony count of health care fraud and nineteen counts of making false statements relating to health care matters.

If convicted, health care fraud carries a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and/or fines up to \$250,000; each count of making false statements carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and/or fines up to \$250,000.

Reap commended the work performed on the case by Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General and Assistant United States Attorney Dorothy McMurtry, who is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The charges set forth in an indictment are merely accusations, and each defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.