

Oakland County Podiatrist Pleads Guilty to Medicare Fraud

29. November 2011 by Jeanne Long

On Monday, November 21, the United States Attorney's office announced that Dr. Richard Behnan, of Clarkston, Michigan, had pleaded guilty to a federal indictment charging him with conspiracy to commit health care fraud. Behnan defrauded Medicare and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan of almost \$1.6 million over a ten-year span.

A traveling podiatrist, Behnan was charged with falsifying the services he performed when he visited various senior living centers and assisted living facilities across the state. Behnan and his assistant provided routine foot care to elderly patients on his visits, primarily consisting of toenail trimming. However, the pair billed Medicare and BCBSM instead for nail avulsions, which are surgical procedures used to treat ingrown toenails. Investigators uncovered that these nail avulsions were never performed.

A federal grand jury in Bay City issued a 48-count indictment against Behnan and his assistant in September 2010. Behnan's assistant pled guilty to several counts of health care fraud in May. Behnan initially maintained his innocence, but changed his plea after his assistant pled guilty. Behnan faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

For more information, see [here](#) and [here](#).