



## LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

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JACKIE LACEY • District Attorney  
SHARON J. MATSUMOTO • Chief Deputy District Attorney

JEAN GUCCIONE • Director

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### **Physician sentenced for evading taxes on fraudulent Medicare billings**

NORWALK -- A physician accused of fraudulently billing Medicare in 2003 and 2004 was ordered today to pay California more than a half-million dollars in back taxes as part of a probationary sentence.

Deputy District Attorney Amy Suehiro of the Fraud Interdiction Unit of the Healthcare Fraud Division said Norwalk Superior Court Judge Patrick T. Meyers also placed Thomas Evans Mitchell Jr., 65, on five years of formal probation and ordered him to perform 350 hours of community service.

A Norwalk jury convicted Mitchell in November of two counts of state tax evasion and deadlocked 11 to 1 for guilt on a third. The third count was dismissed.

The prosecutor said the case involved what she told the jury was a “cut and paste clinic” – Clinica Medica in El Monte – that would cut and paste Mitchell’s letterhead to another bill from another clinic. The bill would be sent to Medicare for services never performed, she said, including expensive diagnostic tests.

During the trial, Suehiro presented evidence that Mitchell received \$1.8 million for a three-month period in which the alleged Medicare fraud occurred. She said the doctor and his wife purchased a \$1.29 million home in North Hollywood during the same time period.

Evidence presented at the trial, Suehiro said, linked Eurasian organized crime to the operation. She presented evidence that Mitchell’s “handlers” were paid up to 75 per cent of each check sent by Medicare to cover the alleged fraudulent billings.

The prosecutor said the case was a joint law enforcement effort involving the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the California Department of Justice, the California Franchise Tax Board and the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office.

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