

Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York

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Brooklyn doctor indicted in illegal sales of over 200 painkiller prescriptions: Pills worth \$700,000 on black market

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, James J. Hunt, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New York Division, New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, James T. Hayes Jr., Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in New York, New York State Police Superintendent Joseph A. D'Amico and Steven Banks, Commissioner of the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), announced today the arrest and indictment of Dr. SCHILLER DESGROTTE on charges he illegally sold over 200 prescriptions for oxycodone, a highly addictive opioid painkiller.

DESGROTTE, a licensed internal medicine practitioner, was arrested this morning at his home at 6 Penn Court in Dix Hills, Long Island as a result of a two-year investigation. He is expected to be arraigned later today in Manhattan Supreme Court before Judge Melissa Jackson, 100 Centre Street, Part 62.

Agents with the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Strike Force conducted court authorized searches seizing medical records and other evidence.

The doctor faces 227 counts of Criminal Sale of a Prescription for a Controlled Substance and one count of Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree. The investigation was conducted by the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Prescription Drug Investigation Unit, the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Strike Force and New York City's Human Resource Administration (HRA), with assistance from the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement (BNE). The Yonkers Police Department initiated the investigation and referred the case to the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Office.

The investigation revealed that DESGROTTE, licensed to practice medicine in New York State for 34 years, allegedly conspired to sell oxycodone prescriptions to an unindicted co-conspirator over the past four years. In carrying out the scheme, the unindicted co-conspirator made frequent visits to the doctor's Brooklyn office and requested prescriptions in multiple names.

DESGROTTE wrote prescriptions in at least 19 names provided by this individual in exchange for \$200 cash per prescription. A court authorized analysis of the doctor's prescribing history revealed that DESGROTTE illegally sold 227 oxycodone prescriptions written in these names between 2010 and 2014. At \$200 per prescription, the doctor is estimated to have collected more than \$45,000 in illegal cash payments.

These 227 prescriptions, which are the subject of charges in the indictment, would have yielded nearly 41,000 pills of 30 mg oxycodone, worth approximately \$700,000 on the black market. The pills are believed to have been distributed in New York City and the surrounding region.

The majority of the 19 names used on the prescriptions belonged to runners who had agreed to fill illegitimate prescriptions at pharmacies in exchange for a fee. Three of the names were fictitious. Prescriptions were filled at a pharmacy in Yonkers and two pharmacies in Brooklyn.

The investigation revealed that one of the runners died on April 6, 2014. Nevertheless, DESGROTTE wrote and sold yet another prescription in the deceased runner's name on May 14, 2014 – nearly six weeks after the death.

The DEA's New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force is comprised of agents and officers of the U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Police Department, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the New York State Police, the U. S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the U.S. Marshals Service, New York National Guard, Office of Foreign Assets Control and the New York Department of Taxation and Finance. The Strike Force is partially funded by the New York/New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), which is a federally funded crime fighting initiative.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan stated, "Today's case exemplifies how one corrupt medical practice in East Flatbush can flood the black market with thousands of highly addictive narcotic pills. The indictment charges Dr. Schiller Desgrottes with selling narcotic prescriptions for \$200 each, and conduct so cavalier that he wrote a prescription in the name of a deceased person. The citizens of this state have every right to expect that doctors who are granted the privilege of practicing medicine in New York will behave better than street level drug dealers. We continue to vigorously prosecute medical professionals who fuel an epidemic of addiction and hope that supervising Medical Boards will hold accountable any doctor who uses his medical license to sell drugs."

James J. Hunt, DEA Special Agent in Charge, said, "On average, there is more than one fatal opioid overdose per day in New York City. Contributing to the deadly statistic are those, like Dr. Desgrottes, who abuse their authority to write prescriptions for no medical purpose other than to supply diverted oxycodone throughout the streets of New York and make a profit." SAC Hunt would like to thank the members of the NY Strike Force and the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, New York City Human Resource Administration for their diligent work throughout this investigation.

New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said, "This doctor allegedly used his medical license as a means to write fraudulent prescriptions which created an avenue for highly addictive pharmaceutical drugs to illegally enter our communities. Thankfully, a collaborative effort between the Drug Enforcement Strike Force and the Office of the Special Narcotic Prosecutor ended this doctor's alleged abuse of his medical authority and potentially saved lives in the process."

James T. Hayes Jr., ICE HSI Special Agent in Charge, "Dr. Desgrottes used his noble profession to allegedly line his pockets by selling prescriptions of oxycodone to drug peddlers. As a result, drug dealers infested our communities with thousands of highly addictive pain killers. HSI will continue to work with its federal and local law enforcement partners to identify these criminal schemes, and seize prescription drugs sold on the black market."

New York State Police Superintendent Joseph A. D'Amico said, "A medical practitioner takes an oath to first, do no harm. The work of this task force and multiple agencies showed the work of this doctor was nothing but harmful. By illegally selling prescriptions for highly addictive painkillers, Dr. Desgrottes put the community he served at risk. I applaud the hard work of the members involved in this investigation and together we will continue the fight to keep drugs off our streets."

HRA Commissioner Steven Banks said, "The alleged conduct here is shameful. The accused is responsible for both distributing a very harmful drug and taking funds from a government program that provides medicines to those who actually need them. I thank all of our law enforcement partners for their excellent work and also HRA staff for their important assistance in this case."

DEFENDANTS

CHARGES

Schiller Desgrottes
6 Penn Court
Dix Hills, NY
11/20/1948

CSPCS – 227 cts
Conspiracy 4th – 1 ct.

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.