

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

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## **City Doctor Arrested for Selling Narcotic Prescriptions to Phantom Patient: \$150,000 Cash and Gold Bars Seized**

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, RAYMOND W. KELLY, New York City Police Commissioner, WILBERT L. PLUMMER, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New York Field Division (DEA), NIRAV R. SHAH, M.D., M.P.H., New York State Commissioner of Health, ROBERT DOAR, Commissioner of the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), and BENJAMIN M. LAWSKY, New York State's Superintendent of Financial Services, announced today the indictment and arrest of SHAIKH MONIRUL HASAN, a physician charged with selling prescriptions for controlled substances from a family medical practice he operated in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

HASAN was arrested at approximately 11 a.m. this morning at his office at 416 37th Street in Sunset Park. His arraignment is scheduled for later today in Manhattan Supreme Court before Judge Larry Stephen. The indictment, filed by the Special Narcotics Prosecutor's Prescription Drug Investigation Unit, follows an investigation that spanned more than one year, and charges HASAN with 32 counts of Criminal Sale of a Prescription for a Controlled Substance.

NYPD detectives, DEA agents and investigators with Special Narcotics, the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE), HRA and the New York State Department of Financial Services conducted a court authorized search of the doctor's Sunset Park office, his home at 155 Harold Road in Woodmere, New York and a safe deposit box leased by HASAN at Capital One

Bank in Hewlett, N.Y. this morning. They seized electronic and paper records, approximately \$150,000 in cash and several one-ounce gold bars. At the time of his arrest, HASAN had approximately \$1,100 cash on his person. Approximately \$80,000 cash and the gold bars were in HASAN's home, while the remainder of the money was in the safe deposit box.

Charges in the indictment unsealed today relate to 3,840 oxycodone pills prescribed in the name of a woman who never visited HASAN, and who was unaware that prescriptions for the highly addictive narcotic painkiller were being filled in her name. The probe was sparked by intelligence received by detectives with the NYPD's Narcotics Borough Brooklyn South Major Case Squad.

During the investigation, detectives learned that HASAN was prescribing a high volume of prescriptions for highly addictive opioid painkillers, in some cases writing up to 100 prescriptions for controlled substances in a single day. The pattern was unusual for a family medical practitioner.

After months of interviews, analysis and other follow up work, an undercover detective with the NYPD observed HASAN write a prescription for 120 30 mg oxycodone pills in the name of a woman who was not present, and whom HASAN had never met or treated as a patient. HASAN provided the prescription to a male patient and received \$80 cash as payment. The undercover detective videotaped this exchange, which took place on April 18th.

Investigators also learned that HASAN had previously written 31 prescriptions for 120 oxycodone pills in the same woman's name between February 2010 and January 2012. Detectives located the woman and learned that she had never heard of HASAN or visited his office. The woman told detectives she lost an identification card issued by a local college in late 2009. She also pointed out that the card contained a misspelling – the last letter of her last name was missing. This same misspelling was repeated on each of the 32 prescriptions written by HASAN for 120 oxycodone pills in the woman's name.

Investigators believe that HASAN would write prescriptions in the names of people he had never met or treated as patients based on identification cards or other forms of identification. The forms of identification were brought in by actual patients to whom they did not belong. HASAN is believed to have dispensed up to 700 oxycodone pills per month to a single individual. This criminal activity is believed to have spanned a number of years.

Investigators also believe that many of the narcotics pills that pharmacies dispensed based on HASAN's prescriptions ended up being sold illegally on the street. The street value of the pills charged in today's indictment alone would have amounted to approximately \$75,000.

The investigation continues into the sales of prescription to other patients, and into insurance, Medicaid and Medicare billing practices. A naturalized U.S. citizen, HASAN graduated from medical school in Bangladesh. He has been licensed to practice medicine in New York since 1995.

Each count of Criminal Sale of a Prescription for a Controlled Substance, a C felony, carries a maximum sentence of 5 ½ years in prison.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor BRIDGET G. BRENNAN thanked the New York City Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration, New York Field Division, the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement and the Office of Professional Medical Conduct for the New York State Department of Health, the Human Resources Administration for the NYC Department of Social Services, the New York State Department of Financial Services and the Westchester County Police Department.

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN said, "As charged in the indictment, there was not even a pretense of delivering medical care in this case. It is rare to come across a physician who so blatantly and callously uses a hard earned medical license to dispense prescriptions to phantom patients in exchange for a fee. This type of criminal activity by a member of the medical profession will not be tolerated."

Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY said, “Dr. Hasan abused his medical license by using his prescription pad to flood Brooklyn streets with highly addictive oxycodone pills. Hasan was arrested after NYPD detectives found that he was subsidizing his Sunset Park medical practice by writing prescriptions in the name of patients he never met and then selling the prescription to a third party. I commend the detectives from Brooklyn South narcotics, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor and city, state and federal agencies for their work during this investigation.”

DEA New York Field Division’s Acting Special Agent in Charge WILBERT L. PLUMMER stated, “The increase in illegally diverted prescription drug abuse is alarming to law enforcement, families, community leaders and our treatment and prevention partners. This arrest exemplifies the dedicated diligence of law enforcement throughout the state to identify those who are diverting prescription medication in every which way from phantom patients, to doctor shopping to stealing them from medicine cabinets or from robbing pharmacies. DEA and our partners are working collaboratively to thwart and end this rising threat to the safety of our communities.”

“Physicians have a duty to prescribe medications responsibly and legally. Unfortunately, we're seeing a rise in prescription drug diversion - particularly for controlled substances,” said New York State Department of Health Commissioner NIRAV R. SHAH, M.D., M.P.H. “The collective efforts of this collaboration are focused on reducing this alarming trend - as today’s arrest illustrates.”

“By writing prescriptions for potent controlled substances in exchange for cash, this physician has not only threatened the integrity of the Medicaid program but also our public health,” said HRA Commissioner ROBERT DOAR. “HRA is committed to vigorously pursuing any Medicaid provider allegedly participating in fraudulent schemes and making sure that they are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I would like to thank New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan and her team for their continuous commitment to pursue the prosecution of those involved in prescription drug diversion.”

INDICTED DEFENDANT	CHARGES
Shaikh Monirul Hasan 1/26/1956 155 Harold Road Woodmere, NY	Criminal Sale of a Prescription for a Controlled Substance – 32 cts

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