

*** NEWS RELEASE ***
OFFICE MANAGER CHARGED
FOR ROLE IN INSURANCE FRAUD SCHEME

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Pacific Pain Care Institute office manager, Maria “Aloha” Eclavea, was arraigned on 23 felony insurance fraud charges resulting from her role with Dr. Steven Mangar in a complex insurance fraud scheme. They were both charged following an investigation that was conducted jointly by the Monterey County District Attorney's Office, the California Department of Insurance, and the California Medical Board. The charges consist of submitting fraudulent health insurance claims and billings.

Dr. Mangar was previously charged and arraigned on May 24, 2016, in the Pacific Pain Care fraud scheme for billing for services that he did not provide, knowingly providing false statements for his financial gain, prescribing controlled substances to an addict, and unlawfully prescribing controlled substances without a legitimate medical purpose.

The newly launched Healthcare Fraud Unit, of the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office, aggressively prosecutes prescription drug fraud by medical providers in Monterey County. The unit also investigates and prosecutes other cases including: use of another's identity to secure healthcare benefits; embezzlement; unlawful solicitations/referrals; fraudulent billing; inflated or falsified pharmacy billings; out-patient surgery center fraud; and fraudulent disability claims.

Eclavea’s bail has been set by Judge Julie Culver in the amount of \$500,000. The defendant if convicted faces a maximum sentence of 27 years of imprisonment. A preliminary hearing has been set for June 9, 2016.

Any patient or insurance company that believes it may have been a victim of this fraud or criminal conduct is asked to contact the Monterey County District Attorney's Office at (831) 883-7508.