

## Report on Medicare Compliance Volume 31, Number 9. March 14, 2022

### News Briefs: March 14, 2022

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By Nina Youngstrom

◆ **A federal jury on March 8 convicted New Jersey rheumatologist Alice Chu for defrauding Medicare and other health insurance programs, the Department of Justice (DOJ) said.**<sup>[1]</sup> From 2010 through 2019, Chu, of Fort Lee, who ran a rheumatology practice in Clifton, billed Medicare and other payers for expensive infusion medications that were never purchased by her practice. She also fraudulently charged millions of dollars for allergy services that patients never got or needed. DOJ said Chu was convicted of conspiracy to commit health care fraud and health care fraud.

◆ **In a March 3 speech to the American Bar Association’s Institute on White Collar Crime, Attorney General Merrick Garland said DOJ’s “first priority in corporate criminal cases is to prosecute the individuals who commit and profit from corporate malfeasance.”**<sup>[2]</sup> As he explained, it’s the priority because “corporations only act through individuals...because penalties imposed on individual wrongdoers are felt by those wrongdoers, rather than by shareholders or inanimate organizations....because—as everyone who has counseled individual corporate officers know—the prospect of personal liability has an uncanny ability to focus the mind. That prospect is the best deterrent to corporate crime. And deterrence—after all—is what we are after. But most important, the prosecution of individuals is our first priority because it is essential to Americans’ trust in the rule of law. As I said a moment ago: the rule of law requires that there not be one rule for the powerful and another for the powerless; one rule for the rich and another for the poor.”

<sup>1</sup> Department of Justice, “New Jersey Doctor Convicted of Multimillion-Dollar Health Care Fraud,” news release, March 8, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3KEWq95>.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Justice, “Attorney General Merrick B. Garland Delivers Remarks to the ABA Institute on White Collar Crime,” news release, March 3, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3pUpwK0>.

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