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◆ San Diego neurosurgeon Lokesh Tantuwaya pleaded guilty Thursday, Sept. 1, to federal charges related to accepting \$3.3 million for performing spinal surgeries at a now-defunct Long Beach, California, hospital, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California said Sept. 1.^[1] Tantuwaya pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit honest services fraud and to violating the Anti-Kickback Statute. According to his plea agreement and statements in court, Tantuwaya took money from Michael Drobot, who owned Pacific Hospital in Long Beach, in return for performing the surgeries at the hospital. "The bribe amount varied depending on the type of spinal surgery," according to the U.S. attorney's office. "Tantuwaya admitted that he knew the receipt of money in exchange for the referral of medical service was illegal and that he owed a fiduciary duty to his patients to not accept money in exchange for taking their surgeries to Pacific Hospital." Drobot went to prison after being convicted for committing a massive workers' compensation system scheme, the U.S attorney's office said.

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