

## Report on Patient Privacy Volume 18, Number 10. October 31, 2018 Privacy briefs: October 2018

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By HCCA Staff

◆ A former gynecologist based in Springfield, Massachusetts, was sentenced to one year of probation for a criminal HIPAA violation and obstruction of a criminal health care investigation. The gynecologist, Rita Luthra was convicted earlier this year following a federal investigation of an osteoporosis drug manufacturer accused of paying kickbacks to physicians to encourage them to prescribe medications (*RPP 6/18, p. 5*). The government said Luthra inappropriately allowed her medical assistant and a representative of the firm to complete preapproval requests to submit to insurance firms for coverage of a new drug. She also was accused of changing her story to investigators questioning the reason behind payments received from the pharmaceutical firm. Federal prosecutors had sought a prison sentence of nearly two years and a fine of \$40,000. However, U.S. District Judge Mark Mastroianni rejected that. Mastroianni said that Luthra's "loss of license and ability to practice is a substantial deterrent." Read more at <https://bit.ly/2DDR5l6>.

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