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By Nina Youngstrom

◆ Peggy Borgfeld, the former chief financial officer and chief operating officer of Little River Healthcare, a critical access hospital in Rockdale, Texas, and three physicians have agreed to pay a total of \$880,199 to settle false claims allegations over kickbacks for lab testing referrals, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) said Dec. 4.^[1] Borgfeld also agreed to a five-year exclusion from Medicare and other federal health care programs. According to DOJ, physicians Linh Nguyen and Thuy Nguyen have agreed to pay \$404,813 to settle two allegations that from October 2015 to February 2018: (1) they were paid thousands of dollars by a supposed management service organization (MSO), Ascend MSO of TX LLC, for ordering lab tests from Little River Healthcare and Boston Heart Diagnostics Corp., a clinical lab in Framingham, Massachusetts, and (2) they got thousands of dollars from an MSO called Geminorium MG LLC for ordering lab tests from True Health Diagnostics LLC, a clinical lab in Frisco, Texas. The third physician, Heriberto Salinas, agreed to pay \$150,386 to settle allegations that from December 2015 to May 201 he got thousands of dollars in MSO payments from Ascend in exchange for ordering lab tests from Little River and thousands of dollars from a supposed MSO named Herculis MG LLC for ordering laboratory tests from Boston Heart. Also, Borgfeld agreed to pay \$325,000 to settle allegations she caused the submission of false claims to Medicare, Medicaid and TRICARE.

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