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JOINT INVESTIGATION LEADS TO CONVICTION IN JUPITER



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Tallahassee, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health’s Unlicensed Activity (ULA) announced that its joint investigation with the Palm Beach Sheriff’s Office (PBSO) has resulted in the conviction of Monica Alexandra Daza for the unlicensed practice of medicine, a third-degree felony punishable by up to one year in jail.

The joint operation was initiated in early 2014 after a local plastic surgeon indicated he had seen at least “40 scarred and disfigured women who were operated on by unlicensed doctors at the Health and Beauty Cosmetic Surgery Office,” located at 307 Evernia Street, Suite #200, in West Palm Beach. PBSO subsequently arrested Daza and Juan Carlos Pinzon on charges of practicing a healthcare profession without a license; Department of Health also issued them notices to cease and desist.

Daza pled guilty to the charge of “unlicensed practice of a health care profession causing seriously bodily injury.” Earlier this month, she was sentenced to 364 days in jail, placed on 5-years’ probation, and ordered to complete 100 hours of community service, in addition to paying restitution in the amount of \$75,000.

The department has several resources to combat unlicensed activity:

- Consumers are encouraged to use the department’s website www.flhealthsource.gov where they can conveniently view the license information of their health care practitioner.
- Complaints may be filed anonymously by completing and mailing the complaint form on the Florida Department of Health’s Web site, calling 1-877-HALT-ULA, or emailing HALTULA@flhealth.gov.

The department’s Division of Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) investigates and refers for prosecution all unlicensed health care activity complaints and allegations. The ULA Unit works in conjunction with law enforcement and the state attorney’s offices to prosecute individuals practicing without a license. In many instances, unlicensed activity is a felony level criminal offense. More importantly, receiving health care from unlicensed people is dangerous and could result in further injury, disease or even death.

Working in conjunction with 22 boards and six councils, MQA regulates seven types of facilities and 200-plus license types in more than 40 health care professions. MQA evaluates the credentials of all applicants for licensure, issues licenses, analyzes and investigates complaints, inspects facilities, assists in prosecuting practice act violations, combats unlicensed activity and

provides credential and discipline history about licensees to the public.

Visit: <http://www.flhealthsource.gov> for additional information about MQA.

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