

The First Arrest for Illegally Accessing PDMP Patient Data

August 1, 2016

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

News Release

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912/729-6198

For Immediate Release August 1, 2016

Nurse Practitioner Arrested for Mishandling Prescription Information from the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Database

Kingsland, Georgia – On Thursday July 28, 2016, the GBI arrested nurse practitioner, Nina Coleman Leonard, age 62, for illegally accessing and disseminating sensitive patient prescription information stored within the PDMP (Prescription Drug Monitoring Program) database.

On June 8, 2016, the GBI initiated the investigation at the request of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency (GDNA), who is responsible for maintaining the database. Leonard was authorized to access the PDMP as a nurse practitioner but violated the law when she researched prescription drug history of two former employees and disseminated the sensitive information to a third party. The queries did not fall within the boundaries of the proper usage of accessing the PDMP and was in violation of Georgia Code Section 16-13-64 (c)(1)*.

Leonard is a licensed Nurse Practitioner and the Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals for LightHorse Healthcare, Inc. in St. Marys, Camden County, Georgia. Leonard turned herself in to the Camden County Jail where she was booked in and released on bond Friday, July 29, 2016.

According to GDNA Director Rick Allen, the arrest of Leonard was the first under Georgia code section 16-13-64. During the 2011 legislative session, the GDNA worked closely with legislators to create the GA PDMP. An important part of this new law was to ensure sensitive prescription information stayed secure. Once the PDMP became active in 2013, mishandling or acquisition of this sensitive information was a criminal act.

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*OCGA 16-13-64 (c) (1) - An individual authorized to access electronic data base prescription information pursuant to this part who knowingly obtains or discloses such information in a manner or for a purpose in violation of this part shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction

thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than five years, a fine not to exceed \$50,000.00, or both.