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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scottsdale Man Indicted for Identity Theft, Illegal Purchase of Narcotics

(Phoenix, Ariz. – September 22, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced the indictment of Ronald Jay Edwin, 52, of Scottsdale, on one count of fraudulent schemes and artifices, one count of theft, 10 counts of acquisition of narcotic drugs by fraud and one count of aggravated taking of the identity of another person. The charges, all felonies, relate to Edwin's alleged use of another person's identity without permission to obtain narcotic drugs.

According to court documents, between November 17, 2006, and January 29, 2008, Edwin unlawfully acquired 22 prescriptions for Actiq in the name of Robert Nelson. Actiq is a Schedule II Narcotic drug also known by the generic name Fentanyl.

Edwin allegedly obtained the prescriptions from Dr. Thomas Petrone, of whom he was a patient. To fill the prescriptions, Edwin allegedly represented himself to pharmacy staff as Robert Nelson and paid using Robert Nelson's Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona insurance benefits.

Court documents state that Dr. Petrone knowingly wrote the prescriptions for Robert Nelson, despite the fact that Nelson had never been his patient. Petrone was not, however, involved in the submission of claims to Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona. Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona paid over \$180,000 for the 22 prescriptions.

In February 2008, Dr. Petrone entered into a consent agreement with the Arizona Board of Medical Examiners to resolve a matter unrelated to this case. As a result of this agreement, Petrone may not practice medicine involving direct patient care, and he is prohibited from prescribing treatments or prescriptions.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Department of Insurance. Assistant Attorney General Beverly Rudnick is prosecuting this case. Copies of the indictment and a photograph of Edwin are available on the Attorney General's Web site, www.azag.gov.

For more information, contact Anne Hilby at (602) 542-8019.

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