

**October 1, 2019**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$3 MILLION SETTLEMENT WITH MAKER OF OPIOID ADDICTION TREATMENT DRUG**

***Part of \$700 Million Multistate Settlement Related to Allegations of Misleading Marketing***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a settlement with the makers of Suboxone, a prescription drug used to treat opioid addiction. The \$700 million multistate settlement resolves allegations that Reckitt Benckiser Group (Reckitt) inappropriately marketed Suboxone, resulting in millions of dollars in improper state Medicaid spending.

Raoul's office, along with attorneys general representing several states, alleged that Reckitt, now known as Indivior, and its subsidiaries used deceptive marketing tactics to increase the sales and prescriptions of Suboxone. The company's aggressive practices resulted in false claims being submitted to states' Medicaid and government health care programs. More than half of the \$700 million settlement will go back to state Medicaid programs, and Illinois will receive more than \$3.375 million.

Suboxone is a brand-name prescription drug used to treat heroin addiction and other opioid addictions by easing addiction cravings. Suboxone and its active ingredient, buprenorphine, are powerful and addictive opioids. No generic alternative is currently available.

"The opioid epidemic that has devastated our country, including communities and families throughout Illinois, was fueled by companies focused on increasing prescriptions at all cost while disregarding patient safety," Raoul said. "Holding these companies accountable is one of my top priorities as Attorney General, and I will continue partnering with other state attorneys general to do just that."

"Opioid addiction has crippled many communities and families in Illinois," Illinois State Police Acting Director Brendan F. Kelly said. "Corporations adding to their misery when they are supposed to be helping must be held to account."

Raoul's office alleged that from 2010 to 2014, Reckitt knowingly promoted the sale and use of Suboxone to doctors who were writing prescriptions to patients without counseling them, and for uses that were unsafe, ineffective and medically unnecessary. According to the Attorney General's office, after introducing a dissolvable film version of Suboxone that is similar in size to a breath strip, Reckitt sought to increase its use through methods including falsely marketing the film as less likely to be diverted or abused than other buprenorphine products. Raoul's office also alleged that Reckitt fraudulently represented to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that it had discontinued manufacturing and sales of its Suboxone tablet version due to safety concerns.

The states also accused Reckitt of inhibiting competition by intentionally delaying generic versions of Suboxone and improperly controlling pricing of Suboxone. As a result, consumers and purchasers – including state and federal health care programs – paid artificially high prices during a time when annual sales of Suboxone topped \$1 billion.

A National Association of Medicaid Fraud Control Units (NAMFCU) team participated in the investigation and settlement negotiations. The NAMFCU Team included the offices of the California, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Virginia, and Washington attorneys general. The settlement resolves the claims against Reckitt brought in six qui tam lawsuits pending in federal courts in the Western District of Virginia and the District of New Jersey.

Assistant Attorney General Melissa Guske and Elisa Hamilton handled the case for Raoul's Medicaid Fraud Bureau.