



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION RESULTS IN ARREST OF STATE NURSE CHARGED WITH FORGING A PRESCRIPTION FOR A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Nurse on Leave from Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced the arrest of a nurse employed by the state Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), on charges that he forged a doctor's signature to obtain Valium. The defendant has been on administrative leave from OPWDD since the forged prescription was discovered.

"This individual was responsible for providing care for those unable to care for themselves – people who have needs uniquely met by OPWDD," said Inspector General Scott. "That he would allegedly abuse his position to illegally obtain narcotics for his own benefit is unconscionable."

Gregory Wait, 50 of Middle Grove, N.Y., is charged with Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony; Forgery in the Second Degree, also a class D felony; and Official Misconduct, a misdemeanor.

OPWDD notified the Inspector General it had uncovered a prescription for Valium made out to the defendant and bearing the signature stamp of a physician working in at the Adirondack Clinic, an OPWDD facility located in Corinth where the defendant is employed. The physician advised the Inspector General that he never approved the prescription and did not stamp it.

The Inspector General's investigation revealed the defendant allegedly used a physician's signature stamp to create a prescription for Valium in his name, which was then faxed to a pharmacy in Lake Luzerne. The prescription was later retrieved and signed for on the pharmacy's electronic signature pad.

The defendant was arrested and arraigned in Corinth Town Court before the Hon. Town Justice Ambrose F. Clothier. He is scheduled to return to court on October 8.

The defendant is a Registered Nurse 2 and has been working for OPWDD since 1983. His salary is \$58,468.

Inspector General Scott would like to thank the New York State Police for their assistance with this arrest, as well as Franklin County District Attorney Derek Champagne for the prosecution of this matter. The defendant is innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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UPDATE: On October 14, 2014, Mr. Wait's charges were adjourned in contemplation of dismissal, with said dismissal scheduled for April 14, 2015. On April 14, 2015, the criminal charges were dismissed and sealed. Further, Mr. Wait was reinstated to his position at OPWDD pursuant to a decision by an arbitrator.