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AG ANNOUNCES PROSECUTIONS FOR ABUSE, THEFT INVOLVING EMPLOYEES OF BESSEMER NURSING HOMES

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced upcoming arraignments, scheduled on January 20, in two cases that his office is prosecuting involving alleged abuse and theft by two employees at different Bessemer nursing homes. Two women are charged, one with injuring an elderly resident and another with theft of \$10,000 of patients’ funds.

Latrice Shuntae Brown, 34, of Birmingham, is charged with abuse of a protected person. The Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit presented evidence to a grand jury in the Bessemer Division of Jefferson County Circuit Court, resulting in Brown’s indictment on October 24, 2014. She is charged with violating the Adult Protective Services Act while she was employed as a certified nursing assistant at the Golden Living Center-Meadowood. Specifically, Brown is accused of throwing an 86-year-old resident onto her bed and causing her head to hit a side table, as well as jerking the call-button from the woman’s hand and causing a cut. The resident was examined at a hospital, and her injuries were described as a hematoma on her forehead and a laceration to her hand requiring stitches.

Alabama’s Adult Protective Services Act provides that any person who intentionally abuses or neglects a “protected person” shall be guilty of a class C felony if the intentional abuse or neglect causes physical injury. A protected person is anyone who resides in a nursing home, mental institution, development center for people with an intellectual disability and/or convalescent care facility. A class C felony is punishable by one to 10 years and a fine of up to \$15,000.

Anita Denise Miller, 49, of Adger, is charged with forgery and theft of patient trust fund monies. The Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit presented evidence to a grand jury in the Bessemer Division of Jefferson County Circuit Court, resulting in Miller’s indictment on October 24, 2014. She is charged with seven counts of third-degree forgery and one count of first-degree theft while she was employed as a bookkeeper for Oak Trace Care and Rehabilitation Center. Miller is accused of stealing more than \$10,000 from the patient trust fund and forging patient signatures to cover up her alleged theft.

First-degree theft is a class B felony with a penalty of two to 20 years and a fine of up to \$30,000. Third-degree forgery is a class A misdemeanor with a penalty of up to one year and a fine of up to \$6,000.

**An indictment is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*

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