

Calif. doc who hailed herbal cancer cure arrested

October 9 2009, By GREG RISLING , Associated Press Writer

(AP) -- Dr. Christine Daniel promised to her patients what many considered the improbable - the chance to cure cancer through an herbal treatment.

Using her influence as an ordained Pentecostal minister, Daniel tapped into the vessel of faith to entice people from across the nation to try her regimen. She even appeared on cable's Trinity Broadcasting Network in December 2002 touting her [cancer](#) cure and its 60 percent success rate, according to federal investigators.

Daniel, 55, of Los Angeles was arrested and charged Thursday with two counts each of wire and mail fraud and faces up to 80 years in prison if convicted. She is scheduled to appear in federal court Friday.

A phone message left for Daniel's attorney, Manuel Miller, was not immediately returned.

Daniel was interviewed by investigators in August 2004, and she denied ever practicing [alternative medicine](#) for cancer, court documents show. She also attested that she never talked about a 60 percent cancer cure rate on television.

In court documents, authorities contend Daniel took advantage of terminally ill cancer patients in their darkest hours, some of whom desperately sought alternative measures after enduring draining rounds of chemotherapy and radiation.

In all, federal prosecutors said Daniel siphoned about \$1.1 million from 55 families between 2001 and 2004. Six patients ranging in age from 4 to 69 died within seven months after seeing Daniel.

One of those was Margaret Antwi, who traveled from Africa and was diagnosed with melanoma in 2003. Her daughter, Christiana Kwakye, was channel surfing one night after spending hours by her mother's hospital bed when she came across a testimonial about Daniel's treatment.

Kwakye, 41, of Minneapolis, cobbled together money with her four siblings and paid about \$3,500 for a shipment sent from Daniel's offices. Antwi drank the brown liquid and soon after Kwakye called a number and prayed with a woman on the other line.

"At that stage you do anything," Kwakye said, trying to explain why they entrusted Daniel. "I should have known better. My mental state wasn't clear at that time."

Antwi's family bought another round of medicine that cost about \$5,000 after Daniel bumped them up to a higher concentration that would be more effective. Antwi died a couple of weeks later at age 62. She had been hopeful Daniel's treatment would work as promised, Kwakye said.

"I struggle with the fact that she (Daniel) wasn't true," she said. "Being a doctor, they do no harm. Why would she do that?"

Other patients traveled to California and stayed at local motels while they were being treated, court documents show.

Prosecutors said Daniel even fleeced other clergy. In late 2003, George McKinney, who founded St. Stephen's Cathedral Church of God in Christ in San Diego, agreed to have his wife, Jean, treated by Daniel.

The couple moved into their son's home in Los Angeles, and Jean McKinney took an herbal mixture three to four times a day for her terminal colon cancer.

Daniel also used a heat machine that was supposed to reduce the tumor, authorities said. The couple paid Daniel more than \$100,000. Jean McKinney died in June 2004.

A phone message seeking comment from George McKinney wasn't returned.

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