

Brazil investigates alleged health care scam (Update)

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Brazil's Justice Ministry says it will investigate doctors and medical supply providers suspected of overcharging the public health care system for prostheses.

"The government declares war against this mafia that steals money from the public coffers and steals the health of the people," Justice Minister Jose Eduardo Cardozo said, according to a post on the ministry's website on Tuesday.

The announcement was made after the Globo TV network reported that manufacturers of prosthetics paid monthly commissions of to \$37,000 to doctors who prescribed their products and performed unnecessary prosthetic surgeries.

Brazil's internal revenue service, the Federal Police and the Administrative Council for Economic Defense, Brazil's antitrust agency, will investigate the "irregular prescription of orthopedic prosthesis," the website said.

The antitrust agency will try to determine if prosthetics manufacturers formed a cartel to defraud the public health care system while the internal revenue service will investigate possible fiscal frauds.

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