

British drug firm Indivior indicted for pushing opioid treatment

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British pharmaceutical firm Indivior Inc. was indicted Tuesday over an alleged scheme to push its treatment for opioid addicts and reap billions of dollars from it.

A [grand jury](#) in the [federal court](#) in Abingdon, Virginia said that Indivior marketed Suboxone Film, an opioid-based drug, as a safe and controllable treatment for opioid and [heroin addiction](#).

But the indictment said that Indivior—until 2014 known as Reckitt Benckiser group—sought to boost sales by exaggerating the safety of Suboxone Film and connecting [patients](#) with doctors who were known to overprescribe it and other opioids, taking advantage of the country's huge opioid addiction crisis.

Beginning in 2010, the indictment said, Indivior illegally told [health care providers](#) and programs that Suboxone Film, which contains the opioid buprenorphine, was better and safer than similar drugs, when in fact it was not.

It also launched a program to connect patients with doctors it "knew were prescribing Suboxone and/or other opioids in a careless and clinically unwarranted manner."

The impact was to be able to force generic competitors from the market, the indictment said.

The company was charged with 28 counts of health care fraud, mail fraud and wire fraud related to the marketing of Suboxone Film.

In a statement Indivior, based in Slough, Britain and Richmond, Virginia, called the indictment "wholly unsupported by either the facts or the law."

The Justice Department "has apparently decided it would rather pursue self-serving headlines on a matter of national significance than achieve an appropriate resolution," it said.

"We will contest this case vigorously and we look forward to the full facts coming out in court."

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