Medical Technician Sentenced to 39 Years for Hep C Outbreak

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A traveling medical technician with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) who infected at least 45 hospital patients was sentenced to 39 years in prison by a federal New Hampshire court, The New York Times reports. David Kwiatkowski pleaded guilty in August to 16 federal charges of drug theft and tampering. He was arrested in 2012 for starting one of the largest outbreaks of the disease in recent decades. The former lab tech stole syringes of painkillers and injected himself with the meds, tainting the syringes with hep C before replacing them with saline and putting them back in circulation for patient use. Kwiatkowski revealed he knew he had hep C but continued to swap syringes at hospitals in several states, including New Hampshire, Kansas and Maryland since 2002. This summer's plea deal saved him a potential conviction of nearly 100 years if the case was brought to trial.

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