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Pharmacist helped father die, court told

A pharmacist has admitted helping his elderly father to commit suicide at their £1.3 million home using stolen morphine, a court has been told.

Bipin Desai was arrested two days after the body of his 85-year-old father, Dhirajlal, was found at the home they shared in Dockenfield, a village near Farnham, Surrey.

Desai, 58, was charged with the theft of pharmaceuticals, murder and an alternative charge of assisting suicide.

He admitted intentionally preparing a lethal dose of morphine capable of encouraging or assisting the suicide of his father during a hearing at Guildford crown court yesterday. The pharmacist also admitted stealing the morphine in May last year and stealing insulin about three months later.

He still faces the charge of murder but this was not put to him in court.

Paul Bogan, QC, for the defence, said that there would be an application to dismiss the murder charge, which would be heard by a High Court judge.

Desai was active in the affluent village, where he had lived since 2009, the court heard. He had been a community warden and a member of the parish council, and ran a successful pharmacy in Farnham.

A crowd of family and friends supported him in court.

Judge Robert Fraser allowed Desai continued bail. He is to appear in court in March next year when the application on his murder charge will be heard.