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**UI deal with Planned Parenthood director draws fire**

BY**NINA EARNEST** | MARCH 01, 2011 **7:20 AM**



The University of Iowa has made a deal with a former professor of obstetrics and gynecology allowing her to break her non-competition agreement to take a job at Planned Parenthood under the condition she continue working as an adjunct for the medical school.

Former Professor Jill Meadows signed the non-competition agreement — which states medical professionals cannot leave to work within a 50-mile radius of the UI Hospitals and Clinics for two years after leaving their position — in January 1999, according to documents obtained by *The Daily Iowan*. In March 2010, Meadows notified hospital officials she was leaving in June to work as the medical director of Planned Parenthood, which serves patients in Iowa and Nebraska.

Under the agreement, medical residents and students will have the option to train under Meadows’ clinic at Planned Parenthood for on-site instruction in the full range of family planning — ranging from training on contraception to the legal termination of pregnancy.

Anti-abortion critics are blasting the agreement, saying it places the university in a close relationship with an abortion service, while pro-choice advocates say it will help train physicians in the field of family planning.

Maggie DeWitte, the executive director of Iowans for LIFE, said her organization would be against any kind of agreement that would place the university in partnership with Planned Parenthood.

“Abortion is not health care,” DeWitte said. “We wouldn’t want our young medical staff being indoctrinated into the philosophies of Planned Parenthood.”

Cheryl Sullenger, a senior policy adviser for the Kansas-based group Operation Rescue, told the Associated Press that the deal put the UI “directly into the abortion business.”

“Why else would students be going to the Planned Parenthood in Iowa City to get training from an abortionist who has defended late-term abortions in court?” Sullenger told AP. “And is this just something they would do for anybody or just for abortionists? Is she getting special treatment because she can provide this training?”

However, Lois Backus, the executive director of Medical Students for Choice, stressed the importance of the UI to maintaining staff who can offer abortion training to residents to maintain accreditation. The director of the 139-chapter national organization noted that it was essential for doctors to have the proper training in family planning to discuss patients’ options.

“Doctors who are informed and educated and give that information when appropriate to their patients are just doing good medical care,” Backus said.

Documents show the UI agreed not to pursue legal action against Meadows — a OB/GYN who worked at the UIHC for 11 years — for breaking the non-competition agreement so long as she worked as an unpaid adjunct clinical associate professor for the UIHC and provided training opportunities for medical students.

UI spokesman Tom Moore said UIHC is obligated to offer the full range of family planning to ensure certification under the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

“We are required to offer it,” he said. “[Residents] are not required to take it.”

Moore said such arrangements with medical staff members and their non-competition agreements are not unusual.

“What’s common is that typically there’s a negotiated resolution, where there is a benefit to both parties to reach an agreement,” Moore said.

Other employees of the Carver College of Medicine reached agreements to work at the Cedar Rapids Medical Education Foundation and the Mid-Eastern Iowa Community Mental Health Center in Iowa City.

Meadows and a representative for Planned Parenthood for the Heartland declined to comment on the issue on Monday.