

Planned Parenthood doctor accused of forcing abortion

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A Colorado Springs woman has filed a lawsuit against Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains and an unnamed doctor for allegedly forcing and botching an abortion.

Ayanna Byer, 40, is being represented by Doug Romero, a lawyer with the Colorado Christian Defense Counsel in Denver. The lawsuit, filed Feb. 6 in El Paso County District Court, claims Byer showed up for an appointment to take Mifepristone, an abortion pill, and was told she was further along in the pregnancy than previously thought and would need surgery.

A medical assistant could not get an I.V. with anesthesia into Byer's arm, according to the lawsuit, and "she believed this to be a sign she should not go through with the abortion." However, the suit says, the unnamed doctor allegedly continued with the abortion after Byer said she had changed her mind.

The lawsuit claims the abortion was stopped only after Byer began crying out in pain from the procedure. She went to the emergency room at Penrose Hospital two days later, where it was discovered that some particles of the fetus had not been removed, causing an infection, according to the lawsuit.

Romero would not comment on the lawsuit. Byer was referred to Romero by Michael Norton, a senior counsel at the Alliance Defending Freedom, which connects Christian lawyers and advocacy groups. Norton said he does not think women's health is Planned Parenthood's priority.

“They’re concerned about promoting abortions,” he said. “The bottom line for Planned Parenthood is not women’s health, it’s revenue.”

Monica McCafferty, a Planned Parenthood spokeswoman, would not comment on Byer but said each patient goes through a thorough education and informed consent process, which includes assuring each patient understands available pain management options.

Planned Parenthood released a statement in response to the lawsuit but would not directly discuss the case because of federal laws protecting patient privacy.

“We cannot comment on the care we provide to any particular patient, even in the face of offensive allegations,” the statement said. “We can say, however, that nothing is more important to us than the safety and well-being of the patients we serve.”