

Abortion Practitioner's License Suspended in Kentucky, Shuts Down Center

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by **Steven Ertelt**

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Lexington, KY (LifeNews.com) — A Kentucky abortion practitioner engaged in such shoddy practices that state officials have temporarily suspended his medical license. The action comes after **Hamid Hussain Sheikh** pleaded not guilty in November to charges that he wrongly billed the state for abortions at his business.

Sheikh was arrested after Attorney General Greg Stumbo conducted an investigation and found he erroneously reported abortions as ultrasounds in Medicaid billing records.

He was indicted on four counts of billing Medicaid for abortions and could face 20 years in prison if convicted on all counts.

In the course of the investigation, the Kentucky medical licensure board talked with numerous former patients who said he treated them poorly. The agency also found problems at his abortion center.

According to a WHAS-TV report, former patients told Kentucky officials Sheikh didn't perform ultrasounds prior to abortions, did a vaginal exam without sterile equipment, and several reported dirty clothing or saw blood on the equipment.

Most of the 22 patients interviewed say they didn't get pain pills or anesthesia prior to the abortion and 8 patients were not required to wait the 24 hours state law requires after getting information about abortion's risks and alternatives.

The television station reported that one woman complained Sheikh told her to "shut up" after experiencing pain during the abortion so other patients in the waiting room wouldn't hear her screams.

The board's inspection of the Lexington abortion business found medications that had expired and bio-hazardous waste that has not been properly disposed in over 12 weeks.

Sheikh told the station he's been a physician for 33 years and never had complaints until last year. He denies all of the allegations from state officials and claims the investigator who inspected his abortion center was biased.

However, a board consultant told WHAS that Sheikh committed "gross negligence" and "put his patients at risk."

In the fraud case, Sheikh, 62, said he billed the state for the ultrasounds he did that were required to determine the gestational age of the unborn child prior to the abortions. He said Medicaid normally covers the ultrasounds and that he charges the women \$400 if they go on to have an abortion.

He also claimed the charges were motivated by pro-life advocates and alleged that Kentucky Bureau of Investigation agent Keith Howard, who talked with him before the charges were handed down, was pro-life.

"To serve 35 years with these anti-abortion people is not an easy thing," he told the Herald Leader newspaper. "They will do as much as possible to hurt me, but I am right and I will defend myself."

Medicaid rules, under the federal Hyde amendment, only allow states to pay for abortions in the rare cases of rape, incest or to save the mother's life.

According to the television station, Sheikh has shut down his abortion center and indicated he retired from practicing medicine earlier this month.