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A Queens grand jury indicted a physician for murder yesterday, charging that he performed an illegal abortion on a patient and then allowed her to bleed to death without offering the slightest medical help.

The physician, Dr. David Benjamin, was charged with second-degree murder for showing "depraved indifference to human life" in the death of Guadalupe Negron. Mrs. Negron, 33, died on July 9 after undergoing what medical officials said was a botched and illegal abortion at Dr. Benjamin's office at 102-21 Roosevelt Avenue in Corona.

The Queens District Attorney, Richard A. Brown, said Dr. Benjamin, whose license to practice medicine was in the process of being revoked when Mrs. Negron died, was believed to be the first physician in New York State charged with murder involving the death of a patient during a medical procedure. License Revoked in June

Dr. Benjamin was held in \$750,000 bail after pleading not guilty in State Supreme Court in Queens.

Dr. Benjamin's license was revoked in June for "gross incompetence and negligence" in five previous cases in which the women he treated suffered life-threatening perforations to their uteruses -- the same injury that led to Mrs. Negron's death, officials said.

But Dr. Benjamin was allowed by law to continue to practice three weeks longer, or until the State Administrative Board of Review upheld the revocation of his license on July 30.

"It marks the first time -- to our knowledge -- that a medical doctor has been charged in this state with murder in connection with the death of a patient during the performance of a medical procedure, Mr. Brown said.

A California doctor, Milos Klvana, was convicted of second-degree murder in 1989, Mr. Brown said, in the death of three premature infants. He added that Dr. Klvana was sentenced to from 45 years to life in prison.

The indictment of Dr. Benjamin on second-degree murder meant that the grand jury found that he "evinced a depraved indifference to human life," Mr. Brown said. The doctor's conduct, he said, was so egregious that it warranted a murder charge despite the fact that he did not intend to kill Mrs. Negron. 25 Years to Life Possible>

If convicted of the charge, Dr. Benjamin would face the same 25 years to life in prison that he would receive if convicted of intentional murder.

Legal experts, however, questioned whether a jury would return a murder conviction in any case in which the prosecution did not prove that the defendant intended to inflict death.

Stephen Gillers, a law professor at New York University, said, "Unless the prosecution shows the doctor walked out and locked the door so she could not get help, then the prosecution has an uphill battle."

He said the prosecution could always ask the jury at trial to consider a lesser charge of manslaughter in the second degree, in which intent to kill does not have to be proven in court. That charge carries a prison term of from 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison upon conviction.

With that apparently in mind, the grand jury also indicted Dr. Benjamin of second degree manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide.

Mr. Brown said yesterday that a murder conviction was fully warranted given the doctor's actions before Mrs. Negron's death.

Mrs. Negron, he said, arrived at Dr. Benjamin's Metro Women's Clinic at 102-21 Roosevelt Avenue after being drawn there by a newspaper advertisement in a Spanish-language newspaper.

Lawyers for Mrs. Negron's family said she paid Dr. Benjamin \$800 for an abortion because she needed to go to work to help support her four children, three of them living in Honduras. Fear of Authorities

Even though Mrs. Negron was Honduran, her husband, Armenio, is an American citizen, thus making her eligible for free medical and abortion services sponsored by the city or by such private organizations as Planned Parenthood. But like many poor people who cannot speak English or who fear various authorities, she went to a private clinic and handed \$800 to the receptionist, the grand jury said.

Mr. Brown said that after Mrs. Negron arrived at Dr. Benjamin's office, he began performing an abortion without first conducting an examination that would have shown that she suffered from high blood pressure and that she was in her 20th week of pregnancy, thus requiring by law that her abortion be performed in a hospital

After wheeling Mrs. Negron out of his treatment room, Mr. Brown said, she was placed in a corridor bleeding profusely from her pelvic area and complaining of intense pain. "Dr. Benjamin is alleged to have given instructions that Mrs. Negron be 'cleaned up' and then to have begun an abortion procedure on another patient," Mr. Brown added.

While she continued to hemorrhage, the indictment said, no medical personnel observed her condition and no equipment was used to monitor her vital signs.

About an hour later, Dr. Benjamin had Mrs. Negron wheeled back into his treatment room and an ambulance arrived soon after. A crew member discovered that Dr. Benjamin had mistakenly inserted into Mrs. Negron's stomach a breathing tube that was supposed to be inserted in her trachea. By this time, she had no pulse or respiration, the indictment said.

Mrs. Negron was then taken to New York Hospital Center in Queens, where she was pronounced dead. 'Depraved Indifference'

Mr. Brown said the acts committed by Dr. Benjamin "cumulatively demonstrated his depraved indifference to human life."

Specifically, he said an autopsy showed Mrs. Negron had died of uncontrolled bleeding caused after Dr. Benjamin perforated her uterus and cervix and then failed "to address the patient's massive bleeding," which he said caused her "to lapse into shock and cardiac arrest" alone and untreated.

Dr. Benjamin compounded his actions, Mr. Brown said, by misleading the ambulance crew as to Mrs. Negron's condition, thus impeding their ability to save her.

"This is a double tragedy," Mr. Brown said. "First is her tragic and unnecessary death as a result of Dr. Benjamin's gross incompetence and wanton recklessness." The second, he said, are laws that allow medical offices like Dr. Benjamin's to be unregulated by state health authorities and which profit "at the expense of the lives of their patients who are oftentimes poor and uneducated."

Photo: Dr. David Benjamin was charged with murder after a Queens grand jury said he performed an illegal abortion on a patient and then allowed her to bleed to death. He was led to his arraignment yesterday in State Supreme Court in Queens. (Steve Hart for The New York Times)