

PHOTOS: Planned Parenthood patient transported to hospital

By Naples Daily News staff report

Monday, May 24, 2010

NAPLES — A patient at Planned Parenthood of Collier County was transported by ambulance today from the clinic on Creech Road to an area hospital, according to emergency medical personnel.

The ambulance arrived at 12:50 p.m. and left with a patient on board a few minutes later, while a dozen abortion opponents were protesting on the sidewalk nearby.

The clinic performs abortions only on Mondays.

“We had a medical call and just transported someone to the hospital for evaluation,” said Cherie Wilson-Watson, spokeswoman for Collier County Emergency Medical Services.

Char Wendel, president and chief executive officer of Planned Parenthood, said she cannot release any information because of privacy laws. She could not say whether the ambulance call was related to an abortion.

“I can’t say that, all I know we are a medical facility and we respond to emergencies,” Wendel said.

Abortion opponent Fred Goduti, said the ambulance call was the first time an ambulance was sent to the clinic since it started performing abortions on Sept. 14, 2009, which are only performed on Mondays.

“We were praying this would not happen,” he said. “It is inevitable it would happen.”

Meanwhile, Goduti said the abortion opponents have had some run-ins with bicyclists recently, most recently with a man riding his bicycle south on Goodlette-Frank Road who confronted a demonstrator and he banged his bicycle into her sign and used some foul language. A similar event occurred two weeks ago with another bicyclist.

The demonstrators have notified law enforcement officers of the most recent incident.

“We will call 911,” he said. “It is almost an assault. All we are doing is praying and holding up our constitutionally (protected) signs,” he said.

With respect to abortion rights advocates, a journalist and photographer for Marie Claire magazine visited the Planned Parenthood clinic a few months ago to do an article about the clinic’s work in a conservative community such as Naples. The article is expected to be published in July or August, Wendel said.

The journalist and photographer were at the clinic on a Monday and the article's original angle may have switched to focus more on the staff working in an atmosphere with a constant presence of protesters on Mondays, Wendel said.



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