

## State shuts Inglewood abo

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### Officials 'lost confidence' after repeated code violations

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Herald Examiner medical writer

Inglewood Women's Hospital, where health officials found what they called "battlefront" conditions last fall, was abruptly shut down by the state Department of Health Services yesterday, and its Medi-Cal privileges revoked.

The state has "lost confidence" in the hospital's ability to provide quality health care, although improvements have been made, said Ralph Lopez, director of the L.A. County Health Facilities Licensing Division.

Dr. Morton W. Barke, owner and chief of staff of the hospital, bitterly decried the action as the work of anti-abortionists, and said his plan was to reopen as a clinic. Clinics are not subject to inspections by state health officials, except those who monitor the performances of individual doctors.

"We have been harassed by anti-abortion groups up and down the state and throughout the country for years," Barke said. "This is just another way, another method, to harass us."

Stories in the Herald Examiner last year detailed a 14-year history of deficiencies cited at the hospital, including 33 found during one inspection in November. Five women have died after receiving abortions at the hospital since 1973, the Herald Examiner found.

Lopez called the Inglewood abortion hospital a facility that was "out of control" that im-

### Hospital

► From A-1

proved only after the devastating inspection in November and intense publicity following it.

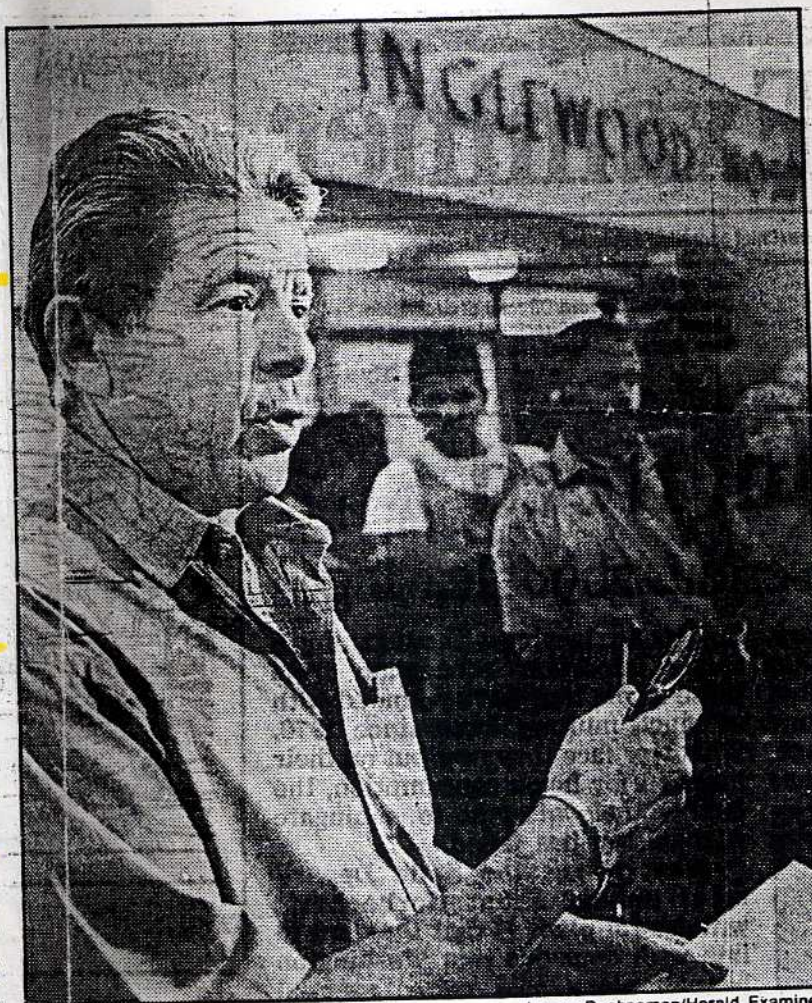
"We would argue it's only under control because you all (the press) are here, and we are here with inspectors every other week. The message is, the state will not tolerate substandard medical care (or) falsification of records," Lopez said.

Lopez and five members of his department served Barke with a temporary restraining order lifting the hospital's license just before 4:30 p.m. yesterday, as Barke was stepping into his white Mercedes sport coupe in the hospital parking lot at 426 E. 99th St. in Inglewood.

The 37-page document outlined 45 patient charts that contained violations relating to anesthesia, including some charts stamped with incorrect information. Twenty patients received the same amount of anesthesia, according to their charts, although they ranged in size from 5 feet 4 inches and 105 pounds, to 5 feet 9 inches and 245 pounds. Either the amounts given or the notations had to be incorrect, the state said.

Nurses with unsterile hands were observed by inspectors treating patients and handling dressings; abnormal test results were not being reported to doctors and patients' vital signs were not properly monitored in the recovery room.

On Nov. 10, an inspector witnessed four abortions during which the table was sprayed with a small amount of disinfectant and wiped with a bloody towel "in a slovenly fashion, leaving blood in the break of the table, (and) blood was dripping between the break of the table."



James Ruebsamen/Herald Examiner

Bitter owner Dr. Morton Barke plans to reopen hospital as clinic

The state also reviewed cases in which physicians signed discharge evaluations before they entered or left surgery, and charts that indicated patients were never examined by a doctor after surgery.

Lopez said health officials will stay in the facility day and night until all patients who have begun the abortion procedure have had their operations completed.

Barke, wearing a gold neck chain and designer jeans, said he was angry about the suddenness

of the state action, which he said left patients scared and confused. "What was the emergency?" he