

STATE BANS CHINATOWN DOC FROM HELL

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The state yesterday suspended the license of a doctor who preyed on Chinese immigrants and conducted abortions in filthy, unsafe offices. Saying he was "an imminent danger to public health," state Health Commissioner Dr. Barbara DeBuono suspended the license of Dr. Eugene Schwalben, who operates clinics in Chinatown and Long Island.

Schwalben, 78, of Baldwin, L.I., was charged with 12 counts of medical misconduct, gross negligence, incompetence, moral unfitness and fraud. He was arrested Aug. 8 after a criminal investigation prompted by a Daily News series on medical charlatans who abuse Chinese immigrants. The News documented how Schwalben, an obstetrician, used two unlicensed, untrained sisters from China to help him perform abortions at two clinics on Canal St. The women advertised as doctors in Chinese language newspapers under Schwalben's license.

One patient said Schwalben and one of the sisters misdiagnosed her tubal pregnancy, botched an abortion on her empty uterus, then left her hemorrhaging and unconscious in a hallway. The woman had to undergo emergency surgery on a burst fallopian tube and a collapsed lung after police, responding to an anonymous call, took her to Downtown Hospital. Schwalben denied treating the patient a claim he repeated to police and state investigators. After a state investigation, DeBuono used her emergency powers to pull Schwalben's license.

Schwalben faces a revocation hearing on Oct. 17. The state Board for Professional Medical Conduct charged Schwalben:

- Falsely advertised he was a board-certified obstetrician and that abortions performed at his office are "absolutely guaranteed" to be "safe," "reliable" and "painless."
- Falsely denied to state investigators that he had been counseled in 1985 for incomplete abortions, deficient sterile technique and unacceptable physical examinations.
- Allowed unqualified, unlicensed individuals to perform medical procedures.

- Performed an abortion on a patient without conducting an adequate pre-operative physical examination that could have detected her ectopic pregnancy. After the botched procedure, he failed to make appropriate arrangements for her adequate care.
- Had unsafe conditions at his East Rockaway, L.I., clinic, including rusted needles, expired barbiturates and other drugs, horse medicines for veterinary use only and partial fetuses in unmarked jars.
- Failed to report federal and state taxes, Social Security and unemployment insurance for his employees.

Original document found online at: <http://www.nydailynews.com/archives/news/state-bans-chinatown-doc-hell-article-1.732706>