

# Dr. Azima Continues Medical Practice

---

*'If he's practicing medicine, he's violating the law as far as I'm concerned.'*

*. . . William Furlow, senior attorney for the Department of Professional Regulation.*

---

By GREGORY ENNS  
Staff Writer

Despite the suspension of Dr. Ali Azima's medical license, the Gulf Coast gynecologist is continuing to practice medicine at a Venice health center which performs abortions.

"If he's practicing medicine, he's violating the law, as far as I'm concerned," said William Furlow, senior attorney for the Department of Professional Regulation.

A receptionist at the Venice Women's Health Center, who would not identify herself, told a reporter Thursday that the physician is accepting appointments and has continued to practice medicine this week.

Azima has a practice at the Venice clinic and at the Southwest Florida Women's Health Clinic in North Fort Myers. State records name his wife, Sal-

ly, as president of both clinics.

Furlow said a representative from DPR's Tampa office would be sent to the Venice clinic to investigate.

And Harry Pullen, assistant director of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services' Office of Licensure and Certification in Jacksonville, said HRS investigators will survey both clinics Feb. 1.

The Florida Board of Medical Examiners directed Azima's license suspended for one year Dec. 1 after it concluded that he failed to follow acceptable standards of medical care when in 1981 he implanted an intrauterine device in a pregnant woman and failed to verify the success of an abortion in another case.

An order outlining the terms of the suspension was approved last week and sent to Azima. According to Furlow, Azima must cease practicing medicine once he receives the order.

Furlow said Azima has not filed an appeal with the District Court of Appeals or requested a stay of the suspension.

Neither Azima nor his attorney, J. Edward Dempsey of Orlando, could be reached for comment Thursday or Friday.

Furlow said Dempsey called him Monday asking him how he would respond to a request for a stay. Furlow said he would oppose it.

J. Riley Davis, an attorney contracted by DPR to prosecute Azima before the Board of Medical Examiners, said Dempsey indicated to him that he intends to file an appeal.

"They're probably in the process of filing an appeal and request for a stay," Davis said. "During the interim, he probably should not be technically practicing medicine."