

Planned Parenthood Hiding Plans for Late Abortions in Virginia Beach

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Wednesday morning, the Virginia Department of Health held an Informal Fact Finding Conference on Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Virginia's Certificate of Public Need (COPN) application to expand their Virginia Beach center to include two operating rooms. This hearing comes on the heels of the Department's [initial denial of Planned Parenthood's request](#). The issue of the expansion has been the subject of media attention since [The Virginian-Pilot uncovered ties between people involved with the center and Dr. Steven Brigham](#).



The proceedings operated much like a court hearing, in which Doug Harris, the Health Department's adjudication officer, heard testimony from counsel on both sides as well as from witnesses on Planned Parenthood's behalf. At the hearing, Planned Parenthood first claimed their expansion would be for the purpose of surgically treating conditions such as chronic pelvic pain, suspicious breast lumps, and incontinence specifically for low-income, uninsured women.

But while discussing the details of the regulatory and licensing process, Harris stated, "Operating rooms [ORs] are approved in Virginia and are fungible. There are no subsets of ORs. An OR is an OR under the regulatory umbrella. If you did something outside your COPN authorizing, there's nothing we can do about it because the license is for a general OR." Harris then pointedly asked Planned Parenthood's legal counsel, Mr. Steve Rosenthal, what their

intention was regarding 2nd AND 3rd trimester abortions. Rosenthal paused and then responded, “There is no intent about 3rd trimester abortions.”

What about 2nd trimester abortions? The attorney seemed to cleverly dodge the question and provide a glimpse into what Planned Parenthood’s real motive for the expansion is – more abortions. Finally, this was a shred of honesty on the part of Planned Parenthood – an implicit admission of their goal to perform 2nd trimester abortions if their COPN application is approved.

Rosenthal’s statement contradicts what had been Planned Parenthood’s public position to this point. When asked in May 2011 if Planned Parenthood would perform 2nd or 3rd trimester abortions (which are not allowed to be performed in centers in Virginia) if their application was granted, Dr. Bob Rashti (Planned Parenthood’s CEO at that time) promised *The Virginian-Pilot*, “As long as I’m CEO, certainly not.” Conveniently, Dr. Rashti retired on July 1st and the center’s new CEO, Patrick Hurd, has not issued a similar guarantee. Mr. Hurd was noticeably absent at today’s hearing, while Dr. Rashti was present as a “volunteer.”

Of course, none of this comes as any surprise to the pro-life community and today’s testimony simply confirms The Family Foundation’s suspicions regarding Planned Parenthood’s intent. Abby Johnson, a former director of a Planned Parenthood abortion center who is now pro-life, sheds light on the goals of Planned Parenthood. Abby says, “Well, the bottom line about Planned Parenthood is that it’s about all the numbers ... there is an abortion quota ... 98 percent of Planned Parenthood services to pregnant women are abortion services. There is only money for Planned Parenthood in abortion services ... My superiors actually instructed me to increase the number of abortions at my facility.” Planned Parenthood of America recently ordered all of its centers to begin performing abortions or lose their affiliation with the parent group.

In keeping with Abby’s recounting of the inner workings of Planned Parenthood, it is not hard to see that the Virginia Beach COPN application is just another attempt by a Planned Parenthood abortion center to increase their abortion numbers and as a result, their profits. It’s unfortunate that Planned Parenthood chooses to use low-income and uninsured women as a marketable facade for their real motives.

Planned Parenthood took the next hour of the COPN hearing to cast a haze over their brief glimpse of honesty. Planned Parenthood presented five witnesses (the Surgical Coordinator, a Board member, a client, the Medical Director/doctor, and Dr. Rashti – the former CEO), all of whom reinforced the non-abortion surgical needs for low-income/uninsured women in the Virginia Beach area – a clever mask for an ignoble cause.

Another interesting development we discovered today deals with the relationship between Eastern Virginia Medical School (a taxpayer-funded school) and Planned Parenthood. Regarding the relationship between the two, Dr. Thomas Kimble, Planned Parenthood’s Virginia Beach Medical Director as well as a professor at EVMS, stated, “[EVMS has] had to refer patients from the academic center to Planned Parenthood.” He continued, “We have a formal rotation for our medical students to rotate through Planned Parenthood.” Taxpayer dollars funneled to the university should not be used to support Planned Parenthood and its

destruction of human life. This is an unacceptable practice and The Family Foundation will be discussing how to correct this issue with legislators.

When asked to describe the Virginia Beach Planned Parenthood center, Dr. Rashti stated, “Our organization is not driven by financial goals, but driven by reaching low-income women. That is our mission.” He later clarified, “That is our *basic* mission.” More accurately, that is what they *say* their mission is. There is no other way to couch it – Planned Parenthood is laser-focused on abortion and any attempt to disguise that is simply a public smokescreen. While a decision regarding the final status of their COPN application will not be rendered until February 2012 at the earliest, Planned Parenthood must be stopped at all costs from performing 2nd trimester abortions in their Virginia Beach center and further increasing their destruction of innocent human life.

LifeNews.com Note: Virginia Cobb is the president of [The Family Foundation of Virginia](#).