



Lexington Abortion Doctor Out Of Jail



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A Lexington abortion doctor accused of fraud is a free man after he bonded out of jail this morning.

Investigators say **Dr. Hamid Hussain Sheikh** performed abortions and then illegally billed the state.

The doctor spoke to 27 NEWSFIRST today with his side of the story.

The doctor says it's all a misunderstanding. The state calls it disguised billing, alleging Dr. Hamid Hussain Sheikh, a long time Lexington abortion doctor, was falsely collecting payments from Medicaid.

A Franklin County grand jury indicted the doctor yesterday. Today he bonded out of jail and talked to us at his Lexington office.

He says he did nothing wrong, billing for office visits and ultra-sounds as he's allowed.

The state, however, says Dr. Sheikh was actually billing for a lot more, and charging the state for abortions.

Dr. Sheikh's says his Lexington clinic will remain open and he will continue to see patients until ordered otherwise.

The four-count indictment accuses the doctor of billing patients for abortions, as well as billing medicaid for the abortions that he reported as fetal ultrasounds.

If convicted, Dr. Sheikh could face up to 20 years in prison and a 10-thousand dollar fine. A Lexington doctor, charged with falsely billing the state for abortions he performed in his office, is out of jail.

AP Story

By ROGER ALFORD
Associated Press Writer

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) - A Kentucky doctor has been jailed on charges that he falsely billed the state for abortions he performed in his Lexington office.

Dr. Hamid Hussain Sheikh was lodged in the Franklin County Detention Center on Tuesday, said Corey Bellamy, a spokesman for the state attorney general's office. The arrest came less than a week after Sheikh was named in a sealed indictment that charged him with Medicaid fraud.

Sheikh was being held on a \$3,000 cash bond. Court records didn't list an attorney for him, and his office was closed on Tuesday.

"Medicaid has a series of regulations and protections in place so it does not pay for any abortion procedures except when the mother's life is in danger or if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest," said Deputy Attorney General Pierce Whites.

The four-count indictment accuses Sheikh, 62, of billing Medicaid for abortions that he falsely reported as fetal ultrasounds.

A Franklin County grand jury concluded that Sheikh had engaged in the scheme since 2004.

In addition to falsely billing Medicaid, the indictment also charged that Sheikh double-billed for the procedures, accepting payments directly from his patients as well.

Investigators from the attorney general's office became suspicious when they reviewed computerized information from claims forms that showed Sheikh was prescribing drugs typically used following abortions, Whites said.

"It's a new way to use technology to safeguard the public," Whites said.

If convicted, Sheikh faces up to 20 years in prison.

Sheikh is scheduled for arraignment in Franklin County circuit court on Nov. 30.

Whites said investigators will forward their findings to the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure for possible action.

Investigators described "deplorable sanitary conditions" in the office where Sheikh performed the abortions.

That finding also will be forwarded to the Board of Medical Licensure, Whites said.

Beth Crace Fisher, a spokeswoman for the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, said the Medicaid program pays for less than 10 abortions a year - and only under the conditions that Whites described.

"Medicaid fraud is something the cabinet takes very seriously," Fisher said. "We're dedicated to identifying all cases of waste, fraud and abuse."

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