

## Oklahoma City abortion doctor agrees to give up medical license, pay fine



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Abortion doctor Naresh G. Patel, right, leaves the Oklahoma County Courthouse with his attorney, Mack Martin, after pleading guilty to three felony fraud counts. [Photo by Paul Hellstern, The Oklahoman]

A longtime abortion doctor has agreed to pay a \$20,000 fine and never practice medicine again as his punishment for selling an abortion-inducing drug to women who weren't really pregnant.

Naresh G. Patel, 62, of Oklahoma City, admitted in a guilty plea Friday to a fraud case that he provided the abortion-inducing drug to three female undercover investigators who were posing as patients.

He told a judge in writing that he represented to all three last year “that as a medical doctor it was my opinion that each patient was ... pregnant when in fact the patients were not pregnant.”

He wrote he did so in order to sell them the drug RU-486 for \$620 each.



Under a plea deal, he will be on probation for 10 years and will serve 18 days — over weekends — at a private correctional facility. He also will surrender his medical license and pay the \$20,000 fine, a \$100 victims' compensation assessment, court costs and \$2,035 in restitution.

He also agreed never to hold any interest — directly or indirectly — in any medical clinic in the future.

The resolution of the criminal case means he is now considered a convicted felon.

The restitution is to go to the attorney general's office, mostly to cover the purchase of the drugs.

“Patel's reckless and reprehensible behavior threatened the lives of his patients,” said Attorney General Scott Pruitt, whose assistants prosecuted the case.



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“This punishment holds Patel accountable for his crimes and ensures he no longer will be a danger to the health and safety of women as a medical professional.”

Assistant Attorney General Megan Tilly said after the sentencing, “This ... protects the interests of women.”

Patel was arrested Dec. 9 at his Warr Acres clinic, Outpatient Services for Women, after the undercover fraud investigation was completed.

Patel has voluntarily not practiced further since his arrest.

Patel operated one of only three abortion clinics in Oklahoma.

The other two are in Tulsa and Norman.

### **Past troubles**

Patel initially was charged after his arrest with four felony counts — one of racketeering and three of obtaining money by false pretenses. Prosecutors later changed the racketeering count to a conspiracy count, which also is a felony.

Patel pleaded guilty Friday to all three counts of obtaining money by false pretenses.

He entered a so-called “Alford plea” to conspiracy, meaning he is accepting the plea deal while still asserting his innocence on that count.

Before his arrest last year, Patel was most known for burning 55 aborted fetuses in a field near Shawnee in 1992.

He was not charged in that instance. He admitted burning the fetuses, saying he had run out of storage space after a hospital stopped letting him use an incinerator.

Patel has been licensed to practice medicine in Oklahoma since May 21, 1984. His full name is Nareshkumar Gandadal Patel.

He also has been involved in a limited liability company that last year sold two adjacent south Oklahoma City hotels for \$27.2 million, records show.

He and his wife this month sold a gas station for \$725,000, records show.

Patel came under investigation because of evidence he had done an unnecessary abortion procedure in 2011 for \$520.

The patient died four months later of cervical cancer.

Her doctor at the time of her death reported she had not been pregnant within the past year.

The patient's sister, Teresa Thomas, of Moore, filed a complaint in 2013 against Patel with the medical licensure board.

Patel has been arrested before — in 1993 when a patient accused him of sexually assaulting her.

He denied her accusation. He was acquitted of two felony counts at a jury trial in 1994.

More recently, a former employee accused Patel in a federal civil lawsuit of sexual harassment. The 2014 lawsuit was settled in September.

