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HEALTH CLINIC PERFORMS MAJORITY OF 4,000 ABORTIONS IN UTAH

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Approximately 4,000 induced abortions are reported each year to the Utah Department of Health, a physician at a Salt Lake clinic that performs such procedures said Saturday.

Dr. Grant P. Bagley, an owner of the Utah Women's Health Center, told the Deseret News that about 80 percent to 90 percent of the abortions performed in Utah are performed at his facility. Also present during the interview was Dr. Madhuri Shah, another clinic physician.

Quite a number of abortion patients come from out of Salt Lake City. "Salt Lake City is a major medical referral center for Idaho, parts of Wyoming, western Colorado and Nevada," Bagley said.

Bagley said he believes the number of reported abortions remains about the same from year to year in Utah.

"Other than private doctor's offices, we are the only clinic outside a hospital that is licensed by the state to perform abortions," Bagley said.

Shah, who is from India, and Bagley said abortion protesters at the clinic often approach people who are coming to the clinic for reasons other than an abortion.

"Marching is not reasonable in the context in which they (the marchers organized by the Salt Lake Christian Action Council) do it, not when they are harming other people. And they are harming other people . . . They are imposing emotional damage on women who are coming in for medical care. I think that is unreasonable," Bagley said.

Shah said the clinic provides many services besides abortion, including prenatal care, pregnancy care, cancer screening and is licensed as a birthing center.

Bagley said, "Abortions are legal and at the present time under the U.S. Supreme Court (ruling) the state can impose minimal restrictions on abortions in the first trimester. The state can impose more supervision in the second trimester and the greatest amount in the third trimester.

"It is important (for people) to know that the vast majority of abortions in Utah as well as the rest of the country are performed in the first trimester. Abortions in the second trimester are the exception and are ordinarily performed in only exceptional cases. Abortions in the third trimester virtually don't exist."