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New Jersey paper spotlights unsanitary conditions at local abortion clinic

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Thursday, May 26, 2011

BY DAN PROCHILO

OF THE MONTCLAIR TIMES

A patient's chest was not hooked up to an EKG monitor, but an EKG status was written on that person's medical record anyway.

State inspectors found a series of health violations at **Pilgrim Medical Center** on Bloomfield Avenue, including some that posed immediate risks to patients.

Before they were ready to be inserted into patients, 10 needles were removed from their packaging and placed in an unsterile plastic container.

Employees were exposing medication to possible contamination by opening vials with their bare hands after having wiped them with alcohol.

Those were among the deficiencies state inspectors said they found during a survey of the **Bloomfield Avenue family planning clinic** Pilgrim Medical Center in July 2009, according to the state Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).

With two operating rooms and doctors who perform gynecological procedures — including abortions up to five months after conception — the center was found to have two “immediate jeopardy” issues that were “serious enough that they posed or could pose a risk for harm” to patients, according to Dawn Thomas, a spokesperson for DHSS.

Among those issues: A single needle was stuck in each of the rubber stoppers for two vials of medication. An unidentified staff member

explained to inspectors that a syringe would be affixed to that needle to withdraw medication prior to each case.

"The same needle was used to withdraw medications for more than one patient," the report reads. "Leaving a needle inserted into a medication vial rubber stopper leaves the vial vulnerable to contamination." The center was also accused of failing "to ensure that there were no expired medications available."

Other infractions the center was cited for during the DHSS survey included a failure "to ensure that there were adequate supplies of medication to treat medical emergencies that may occur at the facility," according to the state report.

Specially, the clinic lacked an adequate supply of the muscle-relaxing drug Dandrolene in case a patient went into malignant hyperthermia, a hereditary condition that causes the sufferer's body temperature to skyrocket and muscles to contract following exposure to anesthesia.

A staff member allegedly told a state inspector that the facility stocks 12 vials of the drug, instead of the recommended 36, since "the rest can be administered in the Emergency Room" after a patient is transported to a hospital, the state report indicated.

At one point, a surveyor walked into one of the operating rooms and noticed that the monitoring machine used during a surgical procedure only had a cable for a device that measures patients' pulse and oxygen levels. When the inspector asked how EKG rhythm is monitored, the staff member pulled a cable out of a plastic bag, began opening drawers to search for the EKG leads and called another employee on the phone to ask where the leads were kept, only to find out they were locked in the medication closet, according to DHSS.

Inspectors also found that blood spills were being spot-cleaned between procedures, and the floor area where the surgical team was working was not being cleaned in its entirety, as it should be under the facility's guidelines.

Rest of story available here: [Abortion clinic cited](#)

An [Ad online](#) shows that Dr. **Nicholas Campanella** MD, works at Pilgrim, and another [paper](#) stated that he performs abortions.

A comment left on another [news article](#) from an alleged former abortion patient of Campanella's condemned the doctor:

The comment dated: Monday May 17, 2010, 6:11 PM reads:
After personal experience with Dr. Campanella, i would NEVER see him again or recommend anyone else, especially children, to see this man! Dr. Campanella performed an incomplete abortion for me and when I called his clinic I was told that I was fine and to take more pain medication. Later in the emergency room, a series of tests revealed that the procedure Dr. Campanella performed was incomplete and my body was hemorrhaging and I would have bled to death within the week. The on-call surgeons had to fix Dr. Campanella's mistake. Dr. Campanella never offered any sympathy or compassion towards me during or after the

ordeal. If you search his name on google you can find a series of health code violations his clinic has faced along with a malpractice case he lost and was ordered to pay \$350,000 in damages. Board certification and thirty years in experience does not necessarily mean this man is a good, safe doctor!

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