

Petition calls Knarr incompetent

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State medical licensing authorities allege the operator of Topeka's only abortion clinic, Dr. William Malcolm Knarr, failed to provide proper medical care to four patients.

The allegations of professional incompetency are part of a 12-count

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rendered medical care to a female patient at a standard below that acceptable at the medical center.

A health professional familiar with the case told the newspaper the 20-year-old woman required an emergency hysterectomy as a result of complication of an abortion.

An associate of Knarr's performed the abortion, but Knarr was called to Bethany's emergency room when the woman arrived there with signs of shock. Knarr sutured several lacerations on the woman's cervix.

Nurses in attendance would tell a hospital review panel Knarr admitted the woman to the intensive-care unit only at their urging.

The woman's medical condition deteriorated, and the hospital tried unsuccessfully to reach Knarr at his home. Knarr told reviewers his phone was out of order because of redecorating, but the health professional said it wasn't the first instance the hospital was unable to contact Knarr.

An obstetrics consultant took over the woman's care and found her cervix sutured shut. The specialist determined the woman's uterus should be removed. The woman recovered.

Knarr said "his actions had nothing to contribute with the outcome in that case," but the trustees disagreed and barred Knarr from admitting gynecological patients.

Trustees later stripped Knarr of his family practice privileges.

Knarr called the action by Bethany "politically motivated" because he performs abortion. He threatened to sue but didn't, according to Wyandotte County District Court records.

The petition filed Friday and a previous order say there is adequate evidence Knarr is impaired because of substance abuse or dependence.

Knarr takes a prescription drug for severe headaches but denies it affects his ability to practice medicine. However, the report of an inpatient evaluation at a Georgia hospital supports the conclusion Knarr is impaired, the board said.

The petition also alleges Knarr:

■ Performed unnecessary tests or

petition filed Friday by the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts.

The board a week ago suspended Knarr, a doctor of osteopathy, from the practice of medicine and surgery and directed staff to prepare the petition for revocation of his license.

The petition identifies the patients only by their initials — A.S., S.E., T.C. and T.R. — and doesn't detail the acts of medical incompetency.

services.

■ Didn't maintain malpractice insurance coverage during 1991.

■ Wrote prescriptions in the name of a Springfield, Mo., clinic or in the name of one of the office staff in violation of federal regulations.

■ Prescribed or administered drugs without the required federal registration.

■ Didn't properly monitor drugs resulting in the loss of vials of Sublimaze, a narcotic.

The petition again raises Knarr's 1970 felony conviction in Oklahoma for the sale of marijuana and LSD and possession of hashish. Knarr pleaded guilty in May 1984 of failing to disclose those drug convictions on a federal application.

Knarr also didn't disclose the Oklahoma conviction when he applied for his Kansas license in 1981. Knarr didn't divulge either conviction when he applied in September 1984 for medical staff privileges at Bethany.

Knarr also has a Missouri medical license, but a check Friday with the Missouri Board of Registration for the Healing Arts showed the document was current and without restrictions.

However, the petition does cite the Feb. 27, 1992, suspension of Knarr's obstetrical and gynecological privileges at Bethany Medical Center in Kansas City, Kan.

The Capital-Journal reported in a March 22, 1992, copyrighted story Knarr lost those privileges after the hospital's trustees determined he

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