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Thursday, November 1, 2007

### Surgeon charged with 12 more counts of sexual misconduct

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By Sam Hemingway  
Free Press Staff Writer

Fletcher Allen Health Care orthopedic surgeon Joseph Abate was arraigned this afternoon on 12 new counts of engaging in sexual misconduct with eight female patients between 2003 and 2007.

According to court documents, Abate used his hands to touch or penetrate the genital areas of the women patients during examinations meant to determine the cause of hip pain.

Prosecutors said in court that in several instances Abate did not wear gloves during the examinations or did not bill the patients for the examinations.

Abate, accompanied by his lawyers, wife and a group of supporters, pleaded not guilty to three sexual assault charges, four aggravated sexual assault charges and five lewd and lascivious charges – all felonies. In June he had pleaded not guilty to single sexual assault and lewd and lascivious charges involving a ninth female patient.

"These are serious criminal charges for which Dr. Abate could get life in prison," Attorney General William Sorrell told reporters outside the courtroom after the arraignment.

Eric Miller, one of Abate's lawyers, said Abate followed proper medical procedures during the examinations and would vehemently contest the charges.

"It is medicine, not sex, that is described in these documents," Miller told the court.

Judge Linda Leavitt rejected a state request to increase Abate's bail from \$10,000 to \$1 million, citing Abate's deep ties to the community.

Abate, 46, is presently on leave from the hospital and his teaching position at the University of Vermont pending the outcome of the criminal case. He has been a longtime orthopedic team physician for both UVM and St. Michael's College, as well as area high schools.



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### STORYCHAT

All Abate has to do to have our illustrious "Attorney General", Sad-Sack Sorrell let him off the hook is to claim he's a volunteer at the local Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. I guess it all depends on what kind of "physician" you are. Bend over, herr doktor.

Posted: Thu Nov 01, 2007 7:10 pm

nottheonly1:

1. The atty general is a raving idiot playing to the cameras as he is an attention whore just like howard the coward was.
2. Didn't support the doctor...I support the process that is taking place. Do I find it hard to believe 11 patients turn up in short order? Yes. Simple logic would make one question the statistical probability of that occurrence.
3. Now we have two new posters "nottheonly1" and "1ofmany" showing up here claiming to the victims of this doctor? Anyone with common sense would wonder what the odds of that are as well 😊

Posted: Thu Nov 01, 2007 6:47 pm

GMP: Why is it that everyone is wrong, but the good Dr? Let's make fun of the Atty Gen, try to turn my own words against me, but then where were you when his fingers were between my legs? Let the case play out.....what about my life? Would you like to tell me how I should let that play out as well? Would you like to tell me how I am ever supposed to trust a doctor again? Would you like to tell me how I am supposed to make sense of what he did to me and to others? Why do you support him so much? Is it because you are a man and he would never do it to you, so who cares, you just want the good DR back to work? What if he did it to your daughter, sister, mother, wife? Would you feel the same way. I said I believe in innocent until proven guilty, the day he touched me in the wrong place, he was guilty and it is an insult to me that he is walking around in public free to live his life after he destroyed so many others, including mine.

Posted: Thu Nov 01, 2007 6:34 pm

I have followed this from day one. The day it came out I took a long lunch and called my husband, who was the only one I had told thus far about what Dr Abate had done to me. I work for Fletcher Allen, and my husband said "you're not going to come forward are you? It will be really hard if it goes public." He's right. For all those folks who think that these women forgot about this until now, you are just plain wrong. Think about it if someone totally humiliated you and made you feel violated and powerless would you want your face/name to be known to people in that reference. It's a very vulnerable feeling that I personally do not care to share with the whole world...or anyone.

It seems people like the idea that we should be able to look at someone and know that they do bad things when they are alone. That naive. Dr. Abate is charismatic and kind. He's articulate and smart. That is precisely why this has gone on so far. These type of people couldn't do this if they did not have the skills to cover it up.

Anyway, I can not believe that I am the only other person who Dr. Abate took to, and I am so thankful that enough people came fwd that I did not have to. I am not proud to say this, but this is real life.

Posted: Thu Nov 01, 2007 6:29 pm

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Scrubs4U....pretty much my thoughts thus far.  
Little billy sorrell turned out for the cameras today. It will be interesting to see where this case ends up going.

nottheonly1:  
"I believe in innocent until proven guilty, but I also believe in not blaming the victim of a sex crime."

Great...then let the case play out.

Posted: Thu Nov 01, 2007 5:28 pm

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