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State suspends obstetrician's license

Print (http://blog.syracuse.com/news/print.html?entry=/2007/12/state_suspends_manlius_obstetr.html)



(<http://connect.syracuse.com/user/jcrocker/index.html>) By Joy Crocker / The Post-Standard

(<http://connect.syracuse.com/user/jcrocker/posts.html>)

on December 12, 2007 at 9:00 PM, updated December 12, 2007 at 9:02 PM

~~(http://blog.syracuse.com/news/print.html?entry=/2007/12/state_suspends_manlius_obstetr.html)~~

The state has suspended for 30 days the medical license of a Manlius doctor accused of improperly using forceps to deliver babies and exposing patients to unnecessary risks.

Dr. James R. Caputo, who operates a practice called The Good Life Centre for Woman at 739 Irving Ave. in Syracuse, was found guilty of gross negligence and negligence on more than one occasion.

Caputo said he is appealing the disciplinary action, and said the state's case is based on trumped-up charges.

A hearing committee of the state Board for Professional Medical Conduct also permanently barred Caputo from performing certain forceps deliveries. Forceps are tong-like instruments used to assist in deliveries.

Dr. Ronald W. Stahl, Crouse's chief medical officer, said the hospital's peer review committee will evaluate the state's case against Caputo.

For more on this story, read staff writer James Mulder's report Thursday in The Post-Standard.

In documents detailing its findings, the hearing committee of the state Board for Professional Medical Conduct said the obstetrician-gynecologist does not recognize the risks associated with using forceps.

The state investigated Caputo's handling of six cases. Here are some problems from those cases identified by the committee in its documents:

-- Caputo mistakenly assumed one patient was eight to nine weeks pregnant. He failed to order an abdominal ultrasound to accurately date her pregnancy. He then incorrectly determined the fetus had died, but had not been expelled yet from the uterus. He gave the woman a drug used to terminate pregnancies during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. The drug, however, did not terminate the pregnancy, so Caputo performed a dilation and curettage -- D&C for short -- an operation in which a sharp instrument is used to remove tissue from inside the uterus. About two weeks later, the patient gave birth to a 7-pound, 15-ounce boy.

-- After delivering a baby who was limp and unresponsive at birth, Caputo failed to immediately cut the umbilical cord so the infant could be quickly transferred to a pediatrician or neonatologist for resuscitation.

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-- Caputo performed surgery on a high-risk patient in 2000 without consulting first with a general surgeon. During the course of the laparoscopic surgery, Caputo injured her bowel, then repaired the injury with sutures. The patient's husband called the next day to say his wife was running a fever and experiencing pain. Caputo should have advised the patient to go a hospital emergency room. Instead he recommended she take milk of magnesia. She was admitted to the hospital the next day, very ill with a rapid heartbeat. The woman could have died of acute peritonitis, a painful inflammation in the inner wall of the abdomen and pelvis.

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May 23, 2008

I can only say that I entered Dr. Caputo's practice several years ago and have never regretted my decision. I have had several gynecologists over the years, and though I'm sure they were competent, most of them were either nondescript or downright interpersonally "challenged" in terms of their ability to explain various aspects of my care or to take a personal interest in my case. From the moment I met Dr. Caputo, I knew I was in the presence of someone who truly cared about me as a whole person. Over the years, he has not only demonstrated quintessential care, but has gotten to know me and my family on a personal level. Any time I had questions or concerns, he dropped everything and sat with me, patiently explaining my options and guiding me through my decisions. He recently performed my hysterectomy, and I have been more than happy with my recovery. After the laparoscopic surgery, I lost so little blood that it was hard to believe that I had undergone a major procedure at all. It may be easy for someone else to pronounce that "being nice" is no substitute for being competent, but holistic care such as that performed consistently by Dr. Caputo over a period of a decade, in my case, is not the same thing as "being nice." I also don't see any evidence from the stories reported in this newspaper that his competence is questionable. I believe that this man was railroaded by a group of "good old boys" in a competing practice and doggedly pursued until they found something they could use to drum him out of business. I'd like for somebody to subpoena all of their case files and nit pick until they found the inevitable mistakes that any human being is bound to make over the course of a busy practice. I don't doubt that, in the course of so many cases, many of them complicated and acute, Dr. Caputo has made some errors. But I also know that he is an honest, "no-nonsense" person who is not afraid to speak out against chicanery and poor practice; for this reason, he could easily have become the target of a witch hunt. My heart goes out to his family and to the many patients, myself included, who will not longer enjoy the quality of care he provided for us. Keep the faith, Dr. C.! You will be vindicated.

 @obogus

Jan 7, 2008

For those of you interested, go read the 2 articles on C sections from 01/06/08 and related posted comments. This is precisely the reason Dr. Caputo uses forceps, especially when the state admits he has the skill and training, and he has never injured a baby with them. The State needs to do more proper

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research. Can you say "witch hunt?"

4areason

Dec 17, 2007

rekceb....since you are a surgeon, and I can not speak for everyone only for what I feel, maybe others will agree. Maybe you just don't know what people look for in a Dr or surgeon since you are one. How often does a Dr go to one?

Personality and bedside manner are things that I DO look for in a Dr. I DO NOT want a Dr or Surgeon that thinks they are better than or above the patient, just because they have a medical degree. I want a doctor that is willing to address my concerns and/or worries. That takes the time to explain things fully so I DO understand what he/she is going to be doing to me during a visit or procedure. Doctors are supposed to educate their patients because you have the degree NOT because we are stupid and put our faith in you for that reason. The comment you left and let me quote you...

"Unfortunately, bed side manor has absolutely nothing to do with competence but a lot to do with unsuspecting non medically exposed people making that the reason why that doctor is the best."

So why do you feel the need to "assume" that we as patients are not educated enough to ask questions to understand a process/procedure? Is this what you think about your patients? If it is, I certainly would like to know who you are because if I was ever told that I needed to see you I would make sure I asked for someone else.

I can speak from experiences with Dr Caputo because I have seen him for visits and a procedure. He was VERY thorough in his explanation (more than once) and made sure I understood the process of what he would be doing. He was also sat through all of my questions for as long as they took.

I can only hope and pray that this is over soon as he has patients anxiously waiting to see him again to deliver their children and make sure we are healthy as we all should be.

scaloni19

Dec 16, 2007

rekceb.....WOW, do you believe in Santa Clause too cause the paper says so? Do you read from rags like the National Enquirer and believe the stories cause they are in print? From my experience in medicine I can understand about bedside manner because most surgeons have a TERRIBLE bedside manner. In fact, in my opinion, most surgeons look at patients not as people, but as the next object that they get to cut. And there are quite a few real hacks out there. You liken a doctor with good bedside manner to a shady car salesman when this can't be farther from the truth. And you assume patients are stupid and can't see through the facade. Patients know. Dr. Caputo's bedside manner is just a small indication of the incredibly appropriate and professional care he provides all his patients everyday. And if the state, the hospital and this newspaper had an ounce of integrity, a modicum of responsibility, they would tell the whole story and not just sensationalize the minutia. Physician complication records are open to the public. Check out Dr. Caputo's.

rekceb

Dec 15, 2007

I can understand that we like to always think our doctor is the best... but most of use who are not in the medical profession lack any real knowledge of that. I can tell you that to have these allegations, it is serious and most very likely true. It is not as easy as many of you think to have an MD brought up on these charges, especially on multiple occasions. I can tell you that by being in surgery for the past thirteen years there are many surgeons who's patients and families have no idea of the skill set of their doctor. Unfortunately, bed side manor has absolutely nothing to do with competence but a lot to do with unsuspecting non medically exposed people making that the reason why that doctor is the best. Personality and bedside manor are very important, but have absolutely nothing to do with being a great MD at the end of the day.

seeb

Dec 14, 2007

I too am an avid supported of Dr. Caputo & his staff. I switched to his practice after my daughter was delivered by another Dr. who gave me a c-section, after 17 hours of labor & 1 hour of pushing, because she was to busy to wait any longer (to the best of my knowledge she has never been brought up on any charges). Dr. Caputo delivered my beautiful dimpled baby boy this year and I have never received better care from any other doctor. During & after surgery, he did everything possible to make me & my husband feel comfortable and was very accurate and precise in everything. If God blesses me with any more children Dr. Caputo is the man I will be going to and I will recommend him to all my friends & family.

I was sickened by the fact that this newspaper choose to publish his home address and I hope neither he nor his family suffer for it. Dr. Caputo you are in our prayers.

4areason

Dec 14, 2007

PJ17.....I don't think any of us expect to be congratulated for doing our jobs...regardless of what our occupation is.....BUT I think that we should give credit where credit is due. Sometimes it is necessary. I would think that if you were in Dr Caputo's shoes you would want your patients to come forward and support you as we are doing for him.

Like donttestme says so much of the news is negative and printed so large and that the good is so tiny and always overlooked and maybe that is what's wrong with the world these days. But that's a whole other topic.

There is a saying that recommendation is the best compliment a doctor can get. Like I said in my last post. I have and will continue to recommend people to go to Dr Caputo. I have complete faith in him and his office. I have never been more comfortable with a doctor and his abilities.

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Dr Caputo, thank you for standing up for yourself. I look forward to reading your statement as well. I am positive that it will be as straight forward as you are! Thanks again for all that you have done for me all these years.

libhill

Dec 14, 2007

I am a current patient of Dr. Caputo's. I am due to deliver in under 3 weeks. I have had very few complications with my pregnancy that is termed "high risk" due to my age and pre-existing medical condition thanks to the kind and professional care provided by Dr. Caputo and his staff. While I am assured that someone will be available to deliver my baby, I'd really prefer it to be the doctor that I have come to trust rather than a stranger who picked up my case at the last minute.... (no fault of theirs- it's just the way it would end up being!)

How is it possible that the medical review board is looking out for MY BEST INTEREST????? From their actions it is clear that this is nothing more than a witch hunt because if they truly CARED about patient health and well being, I would know, with 100% certainty that Dr. Caputo would be delivering my baby!

scaloni19

Dec 14, 2007

What the paper has neglected to mention is how corrupt the state agency is. They have rules and procedures, but do not follow them. For instance, do you know that these same absurd charges against Dr. Caputo have already been thrown out by a higher court, and the OPMC reprimanded for inappropriate conduct to include the lead prosecutor Tim Maher. And yet this same lawyer was allowed to re-prosecute these trumped up charges, let alone still be employed!!! We as citizens should be outraged that our tax dollars are being wasted in this manner and should call for the immediate dismissal of this prosecutor. Time to let truth reign.

pj17

Dec 14, 2007

Are we supposed to know congratulate doctors, health care providers, nurses, or anyone for doing their job correctly and effectively? Apparently people who mock the newspapers for only reporting the negatives feel that just doing the job you were trained and educated to do should be lauded in the news for doing as such. As a health care provider myself, I do my job every day to the best of my ability and training. I don't receive or expect thanks or accolades every day for showing up, doing my job correctly, and caring for my patients. That is my job. BUT, if I make an error, or errors, believe me, I WILL be held accountable. Doctors are compensated very well for their skills and abilities. That is what you and I and our insurance companies pay them for: to do their job correctly and appropriately. If they (or I) make an error, or show a propensity for errors, we must be held accountable. If you want to thank your doctor for a job well done, please, by all means, show them your gratitude! I don't feel that we should be congratulated in the papers for doing what we get paid - very well - for doing.

I know Dr Caputo on a brief, professional level, and have several friends who have had their children delivered by Dr Caputo. They have had nothing but good things to report, and I have respect for him. I hope these accusations and reports are misguided, but mostly I hope for the welfare of those patients who may have been ill-affected by these errors.

donttestme

Dec 14, 2007

native8, did you not read Dr Caputo's response? "grown men with power, authority and connections behaving very badly" He answered the question before you even asked. Kudos Dr Caputo for coming into this forum. I look forward to reading your statement.

4areason

Dec 14, 2007

I am also a patient of Dr Caputo....He has given me nothing but the best care the last 6 or more years that I have been a patient at his practice. He delivered my daughter almost 5 years ago (with a smile on her face..I have the picture to prove it) and he also performed a surgery on me a year ago this past November. I have nothing but the utmost respect for him and his wonderful staff. I could not have asked for a better Doctor. I also like rainrain saw the other doctor at the practice. I have actually been with that office for about 15 years. When Dr Caputo came there I immediately changed to be Dr Caputo's patient and I have NO regrets about it.

As for your comment freddy123...I think being "nice" has a lot to do with the medical field....maybe "caring and compassionate" are better words than nice. Which Dr Caputo EXCEEDS both of those!!!

Dr Caputo if you read this...THANK YOU for EVERYTHING you and your staff have done for me!! I HAVE and will CONTINUE to refer people to you and your office. Thank you for delivering my friend's beautiful little boy the first week of this month, who decided to grace us a month early! I have you, your family and staff in my prayers for a speedy appeal !! I can only hope that my prayers and the prayers of your other loyal patients can take care of you the way you have cared for us.

native8

Dec 14, 2007

Excuse me but what do any of the above stated allegations have to do with forceps???????

tyra

Dec 14, 2007

This is very sad for Dr. Caputo. He is a very good physician. The obstetricians at Crouse have been on a crusade against him for years! Don't be fooled that just because the "State of NY" says something, it is valid. They go by what is on paper and what is on paper is nothing more that trumped up stories by a few doctors at Crouse who think they are holier than God with their "power, authority and connections"!!!! We can only hope that somehow, someday someone will knock them off the high horses they ride on! Shame

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on the administrators and the state for allowing this kind of thing to happen.

native8

Dec 14, 2007

Thank you, Dr. Caputo!

To the skeptics- Things aren't always as they seem. The truth will be sought.

To all the OB's and administrators at Crouse- shame on you all! This is nothing more than a witchhunt by the Frat boys at CIM. All you have done is ruin the reputation of OB care in Syracuse.

blueeyes26

Dec 14, 2007

dr caputo delivered my daughter 8 years ago this month and i was very young. i felt very secure in his skills and bed side manner. if these are true or not it is a very sad situation for anyone to be in and me and my family will pray for the truth and the caputo family!

drc739

Dec 14, 2007

This is Dr Caputo. I was called by a colleague tonight and told of this site. I did not realize all this was going on. As always, I am flattered by my patients' and supporters' comments. I just want to iterate a few points that I have been telling patients today. First and foremost, despite the elaborate medical language in the article, I assure everyone that nothing about this ruling and proceeding is valid. I have been vehemently defending myself for six years against what can only be described here as grown men with power, authority and connections behaving very badly. There is a great deal more to this story. I hope to have a formal statement prepared by tomorrow and hope to post it on line. Always seek truth. James R. Caputo, M.D.

alltkd

Dec 13, 2007

This is a very sad case. I have both personal and professional experience with Dr. Caputo. I would still trust him with the birth of any future children and I trust him completely as a physician. He embodies the personal care that medicine has lost. This is a VERY typical example of what medicine does to a doctor who is VERY effective in health care delivery, yet refuses to play their stupid games; they punish what they fear. Note: James Caputo has NEVER been sued by a patient, and his outcome data for high risk births is among the most impressive in the county. These charges are unusual clinical cases that were 'sent' to the Department of Health by colleagues who are infuriated that Dr. Caputo won't play their childish little games. Those same individuals are employing double standards, yet their mistakes are protected by the 'powers that be'. Those individuals have hurt the effective delivery of obstetric health care delivery in Syracuse by doing this to such a fine physician. God is watching, and the truth will eventually be unveiled. Readers, please see this case for what it is, not for what it appears to be. I would trust Jim with my life.

native8

Dec 13, 2007

Dear freddy123 aka "pollyana"- Wake up! The medical field is a big fraternity. If you are in it, you can do no wrong and tragedies are overlooked. If you're not in it, NOONE is going to back you and stories get inflated. Unfortunately, this Dr. is not a Frat member but an individual thinker. He could have easily plead guilty to these trumped up charges and settled out of court like the most others would, instead he chose to fight for the truth. Unfortunately, money means more than the truth.

donttestme

Dec 13, 2007

freddy123, I dont agree. Everyone is guilty until proven innocent. Dont believe everything you read, especially when it comes from the state. Even though there are 2 sides to every story, you will never know the real truth about the accused. Like it was mentioned, the paper only prints the bad. Sad thing is, the bad is always printed large for us to see and the good is printed so tiny, it gets overlooked. I wish Dr Caputo luck as I am one of his patients.

freddy123

Dec 13, 2007

There are 2 sides to every story, but remember before the state does something like this it has been extensively investigated by many people. This isn't a random decision, according to the state's website, there is a committee that investigates these things.

punkin4sb

Dec 13, 2007

Apparently Freddy123 didn't read the fact that I'm a patient of his. I know being nice has nothing to do with it. I've trusted him with my care for over 2 years now, and he delivered my son and will be delivering my 2nd child. He has always provided excellent care and I will continue to refer people to him. Don't forget, there are 2 sides to every story!

freddy123

Dec 13, 2007

The State of New York Office of Professional Medical Conduct is there to protect us from doctors who are unsafe. There is no conspiracy about this doctor, just a statement of problems with his care. Being nice has nothing to do with good medical care.

hoags4

Dec 13, 2007

Well I don't know for sure if those stories are true, but if they are, it wouldn't surprise me. My mother was a patient of his and he completely botched a surgery that she had. She was in agony for weeks. He should not have a license that's for sure.

punkin4sb

Dec 13, 2007

In regards to the previous post in support of Dr. Caputo. That is EXACTLY why I don't subscribe to the paper, they focus only on the negatives and not on the positives. He is a wonderful person and doesn't deserve any of this, especially with the Holidays right around the corner. My family also is praying for him and his family and the wonderful staff at his office.

staceym6

Dec 13, 2007

I'm deeply saddened by these allegations. The most unfortunate issue at hand is that this paper only reports the negatives. What our newspaper has failed to mention is how many hundreds of successful births that Dr. Caputo has performed that had potential to go wrong; my own and my sister's to name a couple.

I have had several OB-GYN's in my lifetime (as many women do) and I was fortunate enough to enter Dr. Caputo's office five years ago. I have never met such a caring and professional doctor. When my sister's child had issues with her heart at birth, Dr. Caputo had to use the forceps in order to save the baby's life. Had he not be as experienced and professional, the birth could have gone terribly wrong. We Thank God that he was able to make that decision under such critical conditions. Why don't we report the lives that he's saved? It's an injustice when such a great person gets such negative recognition.

My family and I have always and will always support Dr. Caputo and we would recommend him to everyone. Regardless of the issues, we will continue to have our children with him. We pray for him and his family during these difficult times.

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punkin4sb

Dec 13, 2007

This poor guy is getting totally railroaded by his peers. I'm a loyal patient of Dr. Caputo and trust him 100% with my and both of my children's care while I was pregnant. I truly hope he keeps fighting this until his name is cleared, and some of his peers get what is coming towards them. Because it will happen! Dr. Caputo is a wonderful physician and has the best bedside manner of any physician I have ever had. Some of his so called peers could take a lesson from him!

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messtinyusa

Dec 13, 2007

Wow...those are some serious allegations. I also hope that this is resolved quickly for the benefit of his

patients and staff.

daysnights

Dec 13, 2007

IF those last three paragraphs are true then I'd say NYS has plenty of reason to go after him... IF its true. Just because more of his colleagues may be making the same mistakes (w/o getting caught) doesn't mean it's okay for everyone to. This isn't like incorrectly installing a door... he's dealing with people's health. Hey I hope he didn't do any of this and everyone is perfectly okay.

native8

Dec 12, 2007

Sad, this guy was TRULY ambushed by his peers. The rest of them are no better than he is, they just know how to play the game and are better politicians! He simply defended himself. The others just settle out of court so it doesn't get publicized!!

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