

NOW pickets area hospital

By SHIRLEE IDEN
Nancy Roe had a dilation and curetage last Friday at Providence Hospital. On Saturday morning, she was back at the hospital to take a turn at picketing with members of the National Organization for Women.

Her real name's not Nancy Roe, but the tall, tan blond hesitated to identify herself further because she is a sheriff's deputy in Wayne County.

Target of the demonstration was the hospital's board of trustees, composed of eight men in the Roman Catholic order of the Daughters of Charity.

The board voted earlier this month to retain Dr. Don Ray Krohn as chief of obstetrics and gynecology at Providence, after Krohn had been acquitted of charges that he sexually assaulted a West Bloomfield Township woman after entering her home last Oct. 1.

Charged with second-degree criminal sexual conduct for fondling the woman's breasts, Dr. Krohn, of Farmington, testified at his non-jury trial that he had been drinking and had no memory of the alleged assault.

His attorney further asserted that Krohn suffers from hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), a condition that can cause irritability and even blackouts.

OAKLAND COUNTY Circuit Judge William Beer said he found Dr. Krohn innocent because his intoxication prevented him from forming the intent necessary to commit a crime.

Dr. Krohn still faces criminal misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence of liquor and failure to stop on the orders of a police officer as a result of the incident. He has also been sued by his alleged victim since Judge Beer's ruling.

Judge Beer's decision and the action of the hospital trustees both sparked strong protests from NOW. The Oakland County NOW chapter has lobbied against Dr. Krohn's retention as obstetrics and gynecology department head at Providence despite threats of legal action.

Although hospital board members declined to make public the conditions under which they retained Dr. Krohn, his attorney, William Wilson, said Dr. Krohn will be required to follow a diet prescribed by his physician and must promise not to drink.

Dr. Krohn's physician will report monthly to the hospital concerning his patient and Providence's medical director will monitor Krohn's work.

Wilson said the conditions will be in effect for one year.

Sandra Karr, president of Oakland County NOW, said that being on a diet and not drinking do nothing to alleviate the immediate fear for the safety of women patients. "We are outraged," said Ms. Karr.

Reassurances that Dr. Krohn would be monitored also did nothing to reassure Ms. Roe.

"Physician, heal thyself," one read.

"I BELIEVE in justice," said Ann Trexell of Allen Park. "And justice hasn't been done either for the women (Dr. Krohn) molested or for women he may treat in the future."

Shirley Monson of Farmington, immediate past chairwoman of Michigan NOW, sees serious implications for our society in the hospital board's decision to retain Dr. Krohn as well as Judge Beer's ruling.

"Our society is so involved with consenting adults at this time and yet, the trend seems to be to condone violation of the non-consenting adult, usually a woman," she said. "All women seem to be fair game for men."

James Lafferty, a Birmingham attorney who once ran for congress, said he had two reasons for being part of the protest.

"I'm struck by the sexism involved," he said. "The hospital seems unconcerned with protecting women who go there for care."

"Secondly, there is class and the privilege of status. I know full well when people do get to court, status and class gives them privilege. After all we've been through with the Watergate scandal, it is disturbing to see the law treat people unequally."

"I can't remember when in Michigan such an offense was treated so summarily. Judge Beer applied a different standard to the doctor than he would to anyone else."

For several hours, the picketers carried their accusing signs.



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