

TERRIFYING BOTCHED ABORTION BY NURSE RESULTS IN MULTI-MILLION-DOLLAR SUIT AGAINST BRIGHAM-CONNECTED LATE-TERM FACILITY

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Capital Women's Services is a late-term abortion facility in Washington, D.C. with connections to the discredited New Jersey abortionist Steven Chase Brigham. This is where a nurse conducted a botched late-term abortion that resulted in a major medical malpractice suit.

An Operation Rescue Special Investigative Report

By Cheryl Sullenger

Washington, D.C. – From the moment Capital Women's Services opened in 2017, there was controversy.

The facility had quietly located in an unremarkable multi-office building on Georgia Avenue in northwest Washington, D.C. where there were few regulations that would hamper its very-late-term abortion business.

Operation Rescue received a tip from a whistleblower that the discredited New Jersey abortionist Steven Chase Brigham was involved with that facility. Our whistleblower also tipped us to the fact that an elderly Brigham employee, Myron Rose, was conducting surgical and chemical abortions at Capital Women's Services.

While the facility tried to deny its association with Brigham, Operation Rescue successfully documented that connection. This was important to do because Brigham's practices are well-documented to be deceptive and harmful. Those practices include hiring incompetent abortionists and dangerously cutting corners on abortion protocols.

A copy of a leaked e-mail from the Operations Manager of Brigham's American Women's Services, a multi-state abortion chain operated by Brigham, was obtained by Operation Rescue. It discussed Rose's schedule in D.C. and at two known Brigham-operated chemical abortion facilities operating in Maryland at that time. This information was further confirmed by Capital Women's Services' own website that listed Rose as its Medical Director. (Rose has since passed away.)

Operation Rescue also spoke to the property manager at the building that leased to the abortion business. He confirmed that Steven Brigham had negotiated the lease for Capital Women's Services at the Georgia Avenue address.

We later documented one other important point, with the help of pro-life activist Lauren Handy. Brigham was operating the facility under the auspices of United Health Group, LLC, a shady company whose mailing address is a postal box at a UPS Store in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

With the loss of his New Jersey medical license in 2014, (which will be touched on later), Brigham was ordered to divest from American Women's Services in New Jersey. Even that simple order was evaded through a series of sham business dealings that left him in control – something far more important to him than ownership.

Brigham has operated more businesses entities than one can shake a stick at. They go by misleading names such as Grace Medical, Integrity Medical Care, Kindness Corp., Clearlight Management Services, American Healthcare Services, Advanced Professional Services, Alpha Real Estate, and American Wellness Services – to name a few. But all seem to be related to his flagship abortion business, American Women's Services, in some way. Most were obviously meant to conceal his control or limit any liability from the many lawsuits he has faced.

A record of Brigham's nefarious conduct could fill a book. Every one of his medical licenses in six states has been revoked or surrendered under threat of discipline. An illegal bi-state abortion business and other schemes were cooked up to exploit loopholes and avoid state laws. He was once even arrested and jailed on murder charges, from which he was able to weasel his way out.

[Read more about Steven Brigham [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).]

Multi-million-dollar malpractice suit

So why is it a big deal that Brigham is involved with the Capital Women's Services?

It is because a major multi-million-dollar medical malpractice suit was filed in the District of Columbia on September 23, 2021, naming United Health Group, LLC, doing business as Capital Women's Services, as defendants. While Brigham himself is unnamed in that suit, he really should be due to his documented control over Capital Women's Services, which he has tried to keep secret from the public.

This malpractice suit comes as Brigham is attempting to evade a \$6.5 million judgment in a 2014 Maryland case involving a failed chemical abortion using the outdated chemotherapy drug Methotrexate, which left the child with serious health issues. As a result, Brigham shut down his three Maryland abortion facilities in November 2019, in what is believed to be an attempt to keep assets from being seized.

If this latest lawsuit proves successful, it has the potential to shutter his dangerous D.C. abortion facility and further hamstring Brigham's ability to secretly profit from abortion.

[Read Yelp reviews for Capital Women's Services]

"The fact that Brigham still controls abortion businesses in several states is a minor wonder of the world," said Operation Rescue President Troy Newman. "Now we see his fingerprints all over the atrocities that took place at Capital Women's Services. There needs to be accountability for that."

Understanding Brigham's involvement with Capital Women's Services sheds light on why things happened the way they did to one woman who was lucky to survive her abortion.

Nightmare begins

Markeisha Hemsley, a Maryland resident, arrived at Capital Women's Services between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. on the morning of October 25, 2018, for a second trimester Dilation and Evacuation (D&E) abortion. When she first made her appointment, the only information the scheduler asked for was her name and the length of her pregnancy.

Hemsley was accompanied to the abortion facility by her mother. Together, they had managed to scrape together the \$1,495 for the second trimester abortion, which was paid with a combination of cash and credit card.

Hemsley's malpractice complaint alleged that she was never fully informed about her abortion, which is a hallmark of Brigham's known practices. She was never told by anyone at Capital Women's Services what to expect, who would be doing her abortion, how the abortion would be done, or what risks she might be assuming in giving her consent for the abortion.

Hemsley's baby was 20.3 weeks gestation.

The lawsuit's statement of facts explained the national standard used for abortions at 20.3 weeks of pregnancy.

The national standard of care for second-trimester abortions, and specifically for procedures at gestational periods of 20.3 weeks, required 1) the use of an osmotic dilator, typically laminaria, inserted 12-24 hours prior in order to dilate the cervix to 3-4 centimeters, depending on the size of the fetal tissue; 2) the use of two sizes of forceps, referred to as Bierer and Sopher forceps, to extract the fetal tissue and majority of the placenta through the cervix; and 3) a suction curette to then extract the remainder of the fetal tissue and placenta inside of the uterus. Cannulas are rarely wide enough to adequately aspirate the large amount of fetal tissue present at this gestational age.

However, the national standard, as horrific as it is for the baby, was not even close to what Hemsley got.

At around 11:30 a.m., Hemsley was given two doses of Misoprostol. One dose was taken immediately and the second dose an hour later.

Her dosage was the same as given by Capital Women’s Services for Methotrexate and Misoprostol (M&M) chemical abortions done at home over a period of several hours or days. In Hemsley’s situation, the doses should have been taken three hours apart, with the abortion beginning six hours later for maximum dilation effect. This would have an impact on how the day unfolded.

About two hours and 45 minutes after taking the first dose, Hemsley’s name was called, and she was escorted to a procedure room.

Nurse Jefferson

That’s when she met Khalilah Q. Jefferson for the first time. Jefferson had entered the room wearing a white lab coat, but never introduced herself, leaving Hemsley to assume she was a doctor.

Khalilah Q. Jefferson, CRNP, as shown on the Moore OBGYN website.

Jefferson is, in fact, licensed as a registered nurse and a certified registered nurse practitioner in Washington, D.C., and Maryland — not a licensed physician.

In the District of Columbia, non-physicians, including nurse practitioners, are allowed to conduct abortions with no apparent gestational limit. However, second trimester abortions require a very different skill set than simply handing someone abortion pills, or even conducting a relatively simpler first trimester suction aspiration abortion. Nurse Practitioners simply are not qualified to conduct surgeries of this nature.

During the second trimester, the risk of medical catastrophe rises with each passing week. The fact that Capital Women’s Services allowed an unsupervised nurse practitioner to conduct complex second trimester D&E abortions – presumably up to 36 weeks – was appalling. The danger this posed cannot be overstated.

Screen capture from Capital Women’s Services website.

With Hemsley under the illusion that Jefferson was a physician, Jefferson told her to “get undressed, lay down on the operating table, and place her legs in stirrups.” At approximately 2:15 p.m., Jefferson injected two drugs to induce conscious sedation. That was enough, along with the improper dosing of Misoprostol, to cause Hemsley to turn on her side and vomit.

Botched

Jefferson then began the abortion using mechanical dilators, which were insufficient to adequately open Hemsley’s cervix large enough to use the forceps needed to complete her abortion. It is important to note that her malpractice suit claims that osmotic dilators, such as laminaria, were never used on Hemsley.

Laminaria cervical dilators (left) slowly expand to open the cervix over night. Metal mechanical dilators (right) force the cervix open quickly, which can cause injury.

In fact, Hemsley has no memory of seeing Jefferson use forceps at Capital Women’s Services.

According to the legal complaint, Jefferson negligently used a suction cannula with ultrasound guidance to begin removing the baby’s body parts without bothering to first remove the larger pieces of the baby that would not fit through the suction tubing.

By this time, the sedation was beginning to wear off and Hemsley began to feel excruciating pain.

As Jefferson rolled the ultrasound transducer over her abdomen, Hemsley heard Jefferson say repeatedly, “I missed it.”

According to treatment records referenced in the legal complaint, Jefferson was looking for the baby’s calvarium, or skull. Jefferson had perforated Hemsley’s uterus and shoved her baby’s head through the tear where it lodged in her abdomen.

At this point, Jefferson should have called an ambulance to transport Hemsley to a hospital where she could get the surgery she needed to remove the calvarium and treat her uterine perforation and other complications.

Instead, Nurse Jefferson left the procedure room to inform Hemsley's mother that "the sonogram was not giving a clear enough image of the fetus, and that she wanted to move Ms. Hemsley to 'her other office' where they had better equipment," according to the complaint.

"Shut up!"

Jefferson never bothered to tell Hemsley's mother that the "other office" was in Maryland and that no ambulance would be called.

Suffering in pain with a life-threatening internal injury, Hemsley was placed in the back seat of Jefferson's personal BMW SUV with the help of other clinic workers.

Unsure of where she was being taken and in so much pain that she feared she might die, Hemsley begged Jefferson to take her to a hospital.

The complaint narrative described Jefferson's atrocious behavior during the estimated 27-minute nightmarish drive from the D.C. facility to the Moore OBGYN's Greenbelt, Maryland office:

Jefferson transported Ms. Hemsley to the Moore OBGYN facility at 7525 Greenway Center Drive in Greenbelt, MD, approximately 14 miles away and across a state line. Ms. Hemsley remained in tremendous pain and pleaded for Jefferson to stop and take her to the hospital. In response, Jefferson turned the volume up on the stereo to drown out Ms. Hemsley's cries, insulted her, and yelled, "Shut up!"

With the help of an unidentified employee of Moore OBGYN, Hemsley was taken inside, placed on a "operating table," and hooked up to a sonogram belt. Hemsley lay in pain, unsure of what would happen next.

Illegal abortion?

Moore OBGYN, where Jefferson illegally attempted to finish Hemsley's abortion, is located in this multi-office building. This Google Map screen capture shows it is a bit of a walk to the curb, especially for someone suffering from internal injuries.

Jefferson attempted to complete the abortion, even though in Maryland, to do so was a violation of state law that allows only licensed physicians to conduct abortions.

Hemsley's malpractice complaint detailed what happened next.

At this point, Ms. Hemsley's medication had worn off, and she was in extreme pain. She cried out for Jefferson to stop and felt like she was going to die.

Jefferson did not stop and . . . used forceps to try to remove the calvarium from the abdominal cavity through the cervix, a hazardous maneuver with Ms. Hemsley's uterus already perforated.

[Hemsley's mother], who had followed Jefferson to the Moore OBGYN facility and heard her daughter's cries, entered the operating room and saw Jefferson standing in front of her screaming daughter holding bloody forceps.

Jefferson finally relented and agreed that Hemsley should go to the hospital. As Hemsley's mom attempted to call for an ambulance, Jefferson pleaded with her not to reveal the location of the office.

It is unknown how Jefferson thought the ambulance would know how to reach them if the 911 dispatcher was not given the address.

Hemsley's mother refused not to identify the office, so Jefferson then "grabbed [the] phone from her hand and impersonated [Hemsley's mother] to the 9-1-1 dispatcher, repeatedly referring to Ms. Hemsley as 'my daughter.'"

Hemsley, with only her mother's help, was forced to take an elevator to the lower floor then wait on the curb for the ambulance. Held up by her mom, Hemsley drifted in and out of consciousness due to the extreme pain.

When the ambulance arrived, Jefferson "intercepted" the EMTs and identified herself as an employee of Moore OBGYN. She then proceeded to give them a false story about Hemsley's abortion and the true extent of her injuries.

"This misrepresentation was intentional, self-serving, reckless, completely disregarded Ms. Hemsley's rights, and prolonged her pain and suffering," the complaint stated.

Other lies

In Hemsley's charts, Jefferson repeatedly omitted important information or just downright lied about her procedures and Hemsley's condition during the abortion.

Below is an example quoted directly from Hemsley's malpractice complaint.

Hemsley's cervix was noted as dilated to 101 millimeters, or 10.1 centimeters. This diameter is both physically impossible with a mechanical dilator and medically unnecessary. Jefferson also reported an estimated blood loss of just 25 mL, an astonishingly low number for a procedure that typically produces a blood loss in the 100 mL — 400 mL range.

For the record, complete cervical dilation for a woman delivering a full-term baby is 10 cm, at which time, she can begin to push the baby into the world.

Finally at the hospital

Hemsley was finally transported by ambulance to George Washington Hospital's emergency room, arriving at 6:15 p.m. There, she displayed an "altered state of consciousness" and complained of throbbing, severe abdominal pain. She was diagnosed with massive internal bleeding. Doctors discovered a seven-centimeter (or nearly 3 inch) tear in the uterus.

George Washington University Hospital, where Hemsley was finally taken for life-saving care.

Hemsley was rushed into surgery where she was given a horizontal "bikini" incision that stretched from hip to hip so that the surgeon could clean up the blood that pooled between her organs, repair her uterine perforation, and inspect her urethra and bladder for injury. Her uterus was temporarily removed from her body so the skull of her baby could be located and removed.

A doctor consulted with Hemsley after her surgery and advised her not to have children for two years. She explained that if Hemsley ever did become pregnant, she would require strict monitoring and could never deliver vaginally again.

In all, Hemsley spent four days in the hospital.

She was so traumatized by her horrific experience that she feared seeing an OBGYN. It wasn't until February 2021 that she was able to muster the courage to visit an OBGYN again. She continues to suffer "psychological and emotional symptoms, especially in October."

Hemsley's lawsuit is seeking a total of \$30 million in compensatory and punitive damages, costs, and whatever other relief "the court deems just and proper."

Maryland is a mecca for bi-state abortions

Beginning an abortion in one state only to complete it in another is a hallmark of Steven Chase Brigham's sub-standard abortion practices. In 2010, Brigham was involved in a scheme in which he began late-term abortions at his Voorhees office in New Jersey and completed them at a clandestine office in Elkton, Maryland, where there is no set gestational limit on when abortions can be done.

Because New Jersey only allows abortions to 14 weeks in unlicensed facilities like Brigham's, he would insert laminaria and administer Misoprostol in New Jersey. The next day, he would give an additional dose of Misoprostol to induce labor, caravan the laboring women down to the Elkton, Maryland, office, where he would oversee and often assist in the completion of the late-term abortions.

The catch in this nefarious scheme is that Brigham was never licensed to practice in Maryland. Eventually, a woman was severely injured and required emergency surgery and hospitalization. This incident resulted in the revocation of his New Jersey medical license in 2014.

[Read more about this outrageous incident.]

The fact that Jefferson decided to transport Hemsley from Washington, D.C. to Maryland to complete the abortion is too much like Brigham's practices to call it a coincidence. Did she call Brigham for advice when things went wrong with Hemsley's abortion at the Capital Women's Services facility? That's a question that needs to be answered.

Speaking of "Coincidence" . . .

Jefferson transported Hemsley to one of Moore OBGYN's seven offices in Maryland. Owner Javaka Moore also operates a location in Forestville, Maryland. Moore once shared that Forestville office with an abortionist named Harold O. Alexander. Although the office, the receptionist, and even the copy machine was shared by the two practices, they claimed their businesses were separate.

Pictured from left are Maryland's Javaka Moore and Harold O. Alexander, and Florida's James Scott Pendergraft, IV. All were connected to a bi-state late-term abortion scheme that was operated out of a Forestville, Maryland office that Moore shared with Alexander.

At the time, around 2011-2012, Alexander was in business with Florida late-term abortionist James Scott Pendergraft, IV. Pendergraft's Florida medical license was under suspension at the time. He sought ways to continue producing income from the lucrative late-term abortions he could not do in Florida. Instead, Pendergraft solicited late-term abortions customers over the Internet. Customers would first wire money to his Florida bank to pay for the abortions which could cost over \$10,000. The pregnant women would then fly to Maryland where Pendergraft would meet them in a random parking lot then usher them to Alexander and Moore's Forestville office where Pendergraft — who, like Brigham, was never licensed in Maryland — would assist Alexander in completing the abortions.

Once the scheme was documented and publicized by Operation Rescue, Moore denied having anything to do with Pendergraft and Alexander's scheme, much less any abortions.

But the fact that Moore shared an office with a full-time abortionist was an indicator that Moore was comfortable around the dubious abortion practices. That comfort level with abortion was reinforced when Khaliah Jefferson needed to use his office to finish up Hemsley's botched abortion.

In the end, Moore escaped the Alexander-Pendergraft scandal without consequence.

Alexander's medical license was suspended over the scheme and later revoked in 2016, when it became apparent that he illegally destroyed medical records related to those late-term abortions to keep them out of the hands of the Maryland Board of Physicians. In 2021, the Board thankfully denied Alexander's application for license reinstatement.

Maryland's Board of Physicians did nothing to Pendergraft over his part in the illegal bi-state abortion racket. However, he was ever in need of more money than his Florida abortion businesses could supply. In October 2015, Pendergraft was arrested and jailed in South Carolina for operating an illegal home abortion business out of the back of his van. After Operation Rescue made the Florida Medical Board aware of his criminal conviction in South Carolina, it revoked his Florida medical license in December 2018.

Shut them down

Markeisha Hemsley unwittingly stepped into the shadowy world of unregulated abortion where the inept likes of Brigham, Alexander, Pendergraft, and Jefferson — enabled by people like Javaka Moore — can operate with impunity on the tattered edges of the law.

Like with so many other women who went before her, Hemsley did not survive her encounter unscathed.

When Democrat-run states trash accountability and safety standards under the euphemistic guise of expanding “women’s rights,” they are, in reality, creating conditions that expose women to exploitation and life-threatening harm.

This is the lie of abortion on demand.

Those who support true rights for women should be appalled at the left’s thin veneer of Orwellian “newspeak” that obfuscates their gross disregard for the lives and health of women and their children, especially if they are poor people of color.

As for the Hemsley case, there is hope that some tragedy can be avoided with what is expected to be a massive judgment against Jefferson, Capital Women’s Services, and Moore OBGYN – and hopefully Steven Chase Brigham, who appears to be at the center of it all.

“They should all be shut down for good, but Brigham honestly need to be in jail for his often illegal and always dangerous abortion practices,” said Operation Rescue’s Newman. “Moore’s name comes up far too often when we are investigating abortion abuses. He seems to be involved, apparently as an enabler, yet denies it every time. As long as Brigham, Jefferson, and Moore are still allowed to engage in their dangerous schemes, women and their late-term babies will remain at risk.”