

Nurse Bates and aide removed from gyn clinic

By CONNIE HOWARD
Features Editor

Kathy Bates, a registered nurse practitioner, and Linda Wilkins, a nurse's aide, have been removed from the gynecology staff at the Student Health Service.

Dr. L. Augustyn, Director of the Health Service, notified Bates and Wilkins of the decision to transfer them to other departments Fri., Nov. 17, and they began their new duties yesterday. Bates, who was trained as a nurse-practitioner last year by Dr. J.H. Gardner to handle most of the routine work at the gynecology (gyn) clinic, is now a staff nurse. Wilkins is a general nurse's aide.

Augustyn said the transfers were "administrative changes

made for good reasons," adding that he didn't wish to jeopardize professional standards by giving any details.

However, he said that Bates and Wilkins were not moved because of a lack of professional competence. "If that were the case they would have been dismissed," he said. Later in the interview he added that Bates had handled the patient load of the clinic well last spring.

THE DECISION to move Bates and Wilkins was not an abrupt one, he continued. "I conferred with physicians, students, and administrators before making it, but the responsibility for the decision is mine," Augustyn said.

No one will replace Bates on the gyn clinic staff. Another nurse

has been assigned to the clinic, but Dr. Fee, the resident gynecologist, will handle examinations, Augustyn explained.

Women who do not feel comfortable dealing with a man have the option of requesting to see Dr. Furman, he added.

The reason he gave for not replacing Bates with another nurse-practitioner was that: "she handled the patient load well last spring. It's logical to assume that a physician can handle it as well."

However, he added that Gardner had worked part-time in the clinic in a supervisory capacity last spring.

When asked how she feels about giving up her position on the gyn staff, Bates said Augustyn had ordered her not to discuss the

situation on "pain of termination."

HOWEVER, THE shift in personnel is being discussed elsewhere. Susan Newcomer, YWCA Health Information Coordinator, said, "The YWCA is concerned about the quality of gynecology services on this campus — emotional as well as technical."

"I've had women come in here in tears because they were rudely treated by Fee," she continued. "Fee is competent, there is no question about that, but from all the references I've had he's abrupt and judgemental, very judgemental."

One woman who had been examined by Fee elaborated. "He lectured me. He asked personal questions he had no business asking. He wouldn't let me get a word in edgewise. He acted like I had nothing up top. I'd never go back to that man."

The increase in the number of students going to the Ames Planned Parenthood Clinic instead of the Student Health Service for gynecology concerns may be indicative of their opinion of the campus office, Newcomer said.

"I personally would like to see Kathy Bates re-instated because everybody I've talked to has said she is an easy person to deal with," she continued.

"It's important that a woman's first experience with a

gynecologist be positive," she said. If not Kathy, then we should have someone like her — upbeat and positive."

WHEN QUESTIONED about complaints concerning Fee, Augustyn said he would rather not answer. "There have been comments," he said.

"You have to understand. Sometimes complaints are real and sometimes they aren't. Some are misunderstandings, some are exaggerations, some are because emphasis was placed where they didn't think it should be.

"They (the complaints) have to be evaluated to certify lack of professional expertise," he said, adding that all comments and complaints are investigated.

Fee is a renowned gynecologist, Augustyn said. Although he had never worked on a campus before, he taught at a state medical school and had a private practice before joining the Student Health Service staff, Augustyn added.

The direction the gyn clinic takes at this point will depend on Fee. "We hired a gynecologist and it is his responsibility to run the department, with input from me, of course. At the moment it is 'unlikely' that Bates will be re-instated as Fee's assistant, Augustyn said, but he said he would be willing to consider the possibility if students indicate they would like to see her re-instated.

Supports Bates

Editors

I have watched the growing controversy over Dr. Fee, the resident gynecologist at the Student Health Service, with concern. I have never dealt with the man so I don't feel that it

would be fair to pass judgment on him.

However, I have dealt with Kathy Bates and I am very upset that Dr. Augustyn has seen fit to remove her from the gyn clinic. Kathy is a warm, sympathetic person in addition to being a competent nurse-practitioner. She has always been friendly and helpful, answering questions and giving information to students without trying to dictate morality to them.

DR. GARDNER trained Kathy to handle routine

gynecology concerns last fall and had nothing but praise for her performance. Augustyn himself said that the reason she was moved was not a lack of professional competence. Therefore, it is clearly a waste of valuable human resources to take her out of the clinic.

I, and many women like me, urge Dr. Augustyn to re-instate Nurse Bates as Dr. Fee's assistant. It makes sense to have an accredited gynecologist available, but it also makes sense to offer women the option of seeing Kathy for situations she is trained to deal with.

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