

# Schools still plan to give training in abortions

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Kentucky's two medical schools still plan to offer abortion training, despite a vote by Congress last week that undercut an accreditation rule requiring the training.

Obstetrics chairmen at the schools said they would go ahead with plans to comply with the training requirement because it remains in effect despite Congress' attempt to protect schools that resist it.

Dr. Stanley Gall, chairman of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Louisville, said this week that Congress was "basically . . . messing around trying to practice medicine, and that's usually a disaster."

Republican lawmakers were reacting to a requirement by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education that programs that train obstetrician/gynecologists must offer training in abortions to residents who want it, beginning this year.

Normally the council's accreditation is needed to receive federal funds, such as Medicare and Medicaid payments. But last week's federal budget bill forbids governments from denying funds to institutions that lose accreditation because they refuse to offer the training.

Gall said the budget measure served little purpose. For one thing, he said, accreditation is based on a wide range of criteria. "I don't think there's ever any danger of any program being disapproved just on the basis of not providing abortion training," he said. The accreditation council has said the same thing.

Gall also noted that medical training institutions have many reasons other than the threatened loss of federal funds to want to stay accredited.

"When you're not accredited, basically (no residents) will come to your program," he said. "Because nobody can take their board examination if they're not coming from an accredited program."

As long as the rule requiring the abortion training remains in place, Gall said, U of L plans to offer it.

His counterpart at the University of Kentucky, Dr. Frank Miller, said UK also has not changed its plans to offer the training.

Both schools are arranging for residents to get the training at private hospitals and clinics because Kentucky law bans abortions at public facilities except to save mothers' lives.

The rule allows residents with moral or religious objections to opt out of the training.

Margie Montgomery, executive director of the Kentucky Right to Life Association, said yesterday that her organization and other anti-abortion groups probably will try to dissuade the two medical schools from offering the training.

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