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Woman Who Performed Botched Abortions Without a Medical License Pleads Guilty

District Attorney Filed Charges After Victims Came Forward

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) announced today that a woman who posed as a medical doctor and performed abortions at her clinic in the South Bay has pleaded guilty to all charges filed against her. Bertha Pinedo Bugarin, 48, was charged with nine felony counts of practicing medicine without a license and one felony count of grand theft.

“This criminal preyed on women in the Hispanic community and has now been held accountable,” said DA Dumanis. “By passing herself off as a doctor, she put these women’s lives in serious danger.”

Bugarin faces a maximum sentence of nine years in state prison. The sentencing hearing will be held on February 6, 2009 at 10 a.m. in Department 18 of San Diego Superior Court downtown.

At one point, Bugarin operated six abortion clinics in Southern California, advertising one of her clinics on Spanish-language television in San Diego. That business, *Clinica Medica de la Mujer*, was located at 1550 Broadway, #C, in Chula Vista. Bugarin personally performed abortions on several women at that location during February and March of 2007. Patients also say Bugarin gave them prescription drugs.

At least nine victims in the South Bay came forward and identified Bugarin as the person who performed surgical and/or medical procedures on them. One of Bugarin’s patients suffered severe complications and had to be hospitalized twice. She eventually delivered her baby prematurely, which lived for only three hours. Another patient paid \$500 for an abortion, but had to return to the office for a second procedure because the first abortion was unsuccessful.

A year-long investigation by the Chula Vista Police Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department led to Bugarin’s arrest.

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