

Part 15: Dissenting doctors stripped of medical licenses

Diane Blanchard, co-president of Time for Lyme, stressed that the ruling 2 to 4 week Lyme treatment guidelines issued by the powerful Infectious Diseases Society of [North] America, "are being used as a hammer and are essentially forcing (physicians) to comply, and if they don't, they stand to be investigated by state medical boards." (www.ilads.org)

Juris Doctor Susan Ronn explained, "Also, when medical opinion is divided and one side of the divide is perceived as the mainstream, physicians, fearing medical board investigation and censure, become wary of treating outside that model." (June 2009, Southern Medical Law Journal)

Journalist Suzan Erem noted, "After medical boards began charging high-profile doctors with inappropriate treatment, a second group of doctors grew into an organization called the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS). Their clinical experience tells them that the bacteria that causes it is now showing up disguised and paired up with other similar bacteria, generating new symptoms that overlap with even more illnesses." (voicesweb.org, May 2, 2010.)

"When we first began filming 'Under Our Skin,' Senior Producer Kris Newby posted on the www.underourskin.com home page on Mar. 3, 2009, "we had no idea that Dr. Joseph Jemsek, the North Carolina physician treating our main character, Mandy, would end up embroiled in a courtroom battle every bit as dramatic as Mandy's struggle to regain her health."

Newby continued, "In 2006, Dr. Jemsek was the only Lyme specialist operating 'above the radar' in the southeastern United States, and his clinic was admitting an average of 80 new patients a month, from 46 different states."

Newby explained, "Once an investigation was opened, the [North Carolina Medical] board was at liberty to pull all of Dr. Jemsek's Lyme patient files, looking for violations of the IDSA 'standard of care,' which takes on the force of law in North Carolina, even though Dr. Jemsek followed the alternative ILADS Lyme guidelines."

British historian and investigative Lyme journalist Elena Cook wrote in a Feb. 15, 2007 article, "A few years ago, Dr. Lida Mattman, a Nobel Prize nominee who worked on an alternative culture medium for Lyme, was ordered to shut down operations by police who arrived at her lab with handcuffs."

Elena Cook added, "At the time of writing, pediatrician Dr. Charles Ray Jones, credited by thousands of parents with restoring the health of their disabled children, is under trial, accused of misconduct." (ctlymeriders.com)

Susan Ronn pointed out, “[S]ome states, including Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, California, Maryland, Maine and West Virginia have enacted legislation covering Lyme disease issues such as mandating insurance coverage for long-term antibiotic use and protecting doctors from discipline when they utilize treatment modalities other than those proscribed by IDSA.”

Ronn wrote, “Hearings have also been conducted in Pennsylvania, Florida and Massachusetts.

“Stand Up for Lyme” co-founders Suzanne Shaps and J. David Kocurek, Ph.D. added, “Texas is now joining California, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania, and other states to mobilize for protection of our Lyme disease specialists from unwarranted harassment by their medical boards.” (standupforlyme.org)

Dr. Dietrich K. Klinghardt, an M.D. and a Ph.D., concluded: “The response of the public health system so far has been denial and anger towards those who try to uncover the puzzle and help the afflicted patients.” (“Lyme disease: A Look Beyond Antibiotics,” PDF available online)

Next: Ill and disabled in ‘financial ruins’