



Counselor cited for phony billing to hide an affair with ex-patient Weaver did not admit to or deny claim

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OCALA - The Florida Department of Health has disciplined an Ocala mental health counselor accused of phony billing designed to hide an extramarital affair with a former patient.

His wife - now his ex-wife - kept the books.

Michael Kean Weaver, 52, was reprimanded on Nov. 19 by the State Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling. He currently practices at Rapha Counseling Center in Ocala.

His alleged actions violated a state law prohibiting "misleading, deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representations in the practice of mental health counseling."

He was fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay \$3,368 in costs and complete 12 hours of ethics classes.

According to the administrative complaint, Weaver had a physical relationship with a former patient from July 2002 through March 2004. Weaver had counseled the patient from June 1997 to April 2000.

Relationships like this, according to an investigator for the Citizens Commission on Human Rights of Florida, are occurring more and more frequently.

"I've run into all kinds of cases with psychologists or counselors having sex with their patients, probably over 100 over the last few years," said Ken Kramer, an investigator for the commission who monitors state reports daily. "But what's really interesting about this case is that he faked documents to cover up his affair. I've never seen that before."

To keep his wife from finding out about his extramarital relationship, Weaver created billing records that indicated the patient received treatment through March 2004, according to the complaint.

In a settlement signed Sept. 12, Weaver acknowledged probable cause for the case against him but did not accept or deny the allegations. He refused to

comment Wednesday to the Star-Banner.

Kramer believes that Weaver got off too easy.

"There's a lot more the board could have done, like take away his license," Kramer said. "If you sleep with a current patient, that's a felony. He changed his records to make her a current patient."