

Review of Common Objections Raised to Reports of Catholic Hospitals Referring for Abortions

Below are some of the claims (including those by SSM) that at first, may seem plausible but are actually factually and demonstrably untrue. The evidence for the latter is included for each claim.

CLAIM The SSM VP McCrudden in reporting to the State Officers of the Knights of Columbus the findings of his one man “investigation” into allegations of referrals ‘ that they cannot share any actual “evidence” of their in-house child abuse of unborn developmentally disabled children because of Federal privacy laws.

(As the State Knights of Columbus reported about their meeting with that same SSM employee when reporting to them on the findings of his “investigation:

“Although he was open and candid with us, he was also obligated to maintain patient confidentiality. Therefore, he could not provide extensive details of the investigation.”(HIPPA) FALSE

FACTS: This is factually and demonstrably wrong.

In Fact, HHS has an entire section on its web page regarding federal privacy rules (HIPPA) devoted to [how to redact identifying information](#) from a patient file in order to disclose other information in that file. [Methods for De-identification of PHI | HHS.gov](#)

De-identification and its Rationale

The increasing adoption of health information technologies in the United States accelerates their potential to facilitate beneficial studies that combine large, complex data sets from multiple sources. The process of de-identification, by which identifiers are removed from the health information, mitigates privacy risks to individuals and thereby supports the secondary use of data for comparative effectiveness studies, policy assessment, life sciences research, and other endeavors.....

Regardless of the method by which de-identification is achieved, the Privacy Rule does not restrict the use or disclosure of de-identified health information, as it is no longer considered protected health information.

Anyone who works in the health care field, as I have for over 35 years, is required to annually recertify regarding these rules. How is it possible the SSM VP continues to misrepresent those rules?

CLAIM Catholic hospitals are legally mandated to give all “options”. FALSE

Below is part of an e-mail from an individual who identified herself as a former chaplain for Cardinal Glennon making this oft repeated claim by SSM.

The truth about the whole issue regarding Cardinal Glennon and abortion has been misconstrued. If you're going to publish something like this, get your facts straight . I was a Catholic chaplain at Glennon for 15 years full time and 10 years part time. Glennon is NOT REFERRING PEOPLE FOR ABORTIONS. Legally, when people come for help you have to give them options, to inform people of their options is not referring people for abortions.

To insinuate that Glennon is doing this is a complete twisting of truth ... to want to withdraw funding from an institution that treats poor children and families is actually short sighted at best, and actually mean and malicious. Your organization is participating in this way in a form of systematic evil; and quite frankly totally disrespectful of the holy body of God and his people.

is noteworthy that SSM has claimed this since our first interaction with them about this scandal in 2019. They seek cover in "the law" mandating participation in abortion referrals/options.

FACTS: This is factually and demonstrably wrong.

In fact it is the **direct opposite**. The law (**federal and state**- see below) specifically forbids “hospitals” and ‘medical personnel” from being forced to go against his/her/its belief and become involved in abortion in any manner.

HERE IS THE LAW: The federal law in effect since the 1970’s as well as current state law providing these protections for hospitals like SSM (as well as their medical personnel) includes that they not be required to even "advise" regarding abortion

- **Missouri Law** revised.mo.gov Title XII PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE 197.032)
- **Federal Law:** Interestingly the federal conscience protections (which include protection from being expected to even "accommodate" abortions) have been in effect **since the 1970's** (42 U.S.C & 300a-7)!

CLAIM The Archdiocese issued a statement the week before the Glennon Sunday Cardinal Glennon collection endorsing the SSM “investigation”. **FALSE**

This is an excerpt from the email the Archdiocese sent to all Priests and Deacons in the week leading up to the Glennon Sunday collection. Pay attention to what it **actually says** about the “investigation”. You will see it simply acknowledges that **SSM** “assures Archbishop Rozanski” that there is no problem. Again, relying upon their own internal “investigation”. Nothing else. No ringing endorsement of that “investigation” just that they, like the rest of us, were assured by SSM that nothing happened. There is a reason for the use of such language.

FACTS Here’s the part of that weekly message to clergy that includes that statement:

Archbishop Rozanski encourages all to support SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Foundation

- *The Archdiocese of St. Louis has received concerns regarding some of the medical practices at SSM institutions. SSM has conducted investigations and assures Archbishop Rozanski that medical care given at SSM institutions is aligned with Church teaching.*
- *For more than a generation—and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic—SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital has continued to provide exceptional healthcare and reveal the healing presence of God for all of its children and young patients, regardless of their families’ ability to pay.*
- *As the new Chairman of the Cardinal Glennon Children’s Foundation Board of Governors, Archbishop Rozanski wholeheartedly encourages all of the faithful to contribute to the good work that is saving lives through the annual Glennon Sunday campaign.*
- *Please encourage parishioners to give at Glennon.org.*

CLAIM These accusations do not involve Child Abuse so the Church requirements for investigating credible reports of child abuse do not apply because the state does not consider abortion to be child abuse. **FALSE**

FACTS Abortion is an objectively violent act (not an idea) that involves the premeditated cold blooded killing of an innocent unborn child. Because of the advanced age of these victims the act is even more gruesome as these children were all dismembered, decapitated and crushed until dead, their pain receptors long since present and functioning. The allegations by more than 16 witnesses (usually couples) that the Maternal and Fetal Care Department at at least four different SSM hospitals, including Cardinal Glennon Hospital for Children, identified their unborn children as developmentally disabled and referred them to the Hope(less) abortion mill to be killed. If THAT is not child abuse, nothing is.

By now many have reviewed the report and concluded the accusations are at least “credible” the standard for all identified child abuse allegations which require the accused (in this case the Maternal and Fetal Care department) to be relieved of duties pending an INDEPENDENT, comprehensive and transparent investigation. Under no circumstance is the accused allowed to do their own hidden “investigation.”

A brother Knight brought to his pastor's attention the extensive evidence that area Catholic hospitals, mostly SSM Hospitals Maternal and Fetal Health Departments and most recently SSM Cardinal Glennon Hospital for Children have been directly referring parents of identified developmentally disabled unborn children to Hope(less) abortion mill in Granite City to be killed! His pastor agreed to review the extensive report substantiating these allegations. The pastor spoke to his parishioner the next day and told him he was so appalled and convicted by the evidence presented that he immediately contacted other pastors and shared that same file and that their conclusions ranged from the evidence was plausible (credible) to definite.

That pastor identified this as child abuse of the highest order and noted that as such the same standard of response applied by the church to credible reports of child abuse be applied here. That is the accused (in this case the SSM Maternal and Fetal Care Departments, particularly SSM Cardinal Glennon, be shuttered pending the results of an independent and comprehensive investigation. In the meantime, he said he also contacted Cardinal Glennon and advised them his parish would not participate in the Glennon Sunday collection until and unless these steps are taken and the scandal resolved.

The dark days of the Church abuse history of the past, utilizing in-house "investigations" of such child abuse accusations, is supposed to be long over. It is reasonable to ask, why does SSM repeatedly resort to the **long-discredited process** of in house “investigations” (secrecy, which you will recall actually helped perpetuate the abuse scandal in the Church for decades)? None of us wants to think about Catholic hospitals being involved in abortion referrals. It is so contrary to our sense of the Church. Of course, most of us were likewise shocked decades ago by the previous abuse scandal in the Church when it came to our attention. It seemed unthinkable. By the time we finally opened our eyes to that child abuse scandal it was decades old. We have no idea how long this child abuse has been happening but it’s well past time to find out. And put an end to the unthinkable: Catholic hospitals involved in the abortion referrals.

CLAIM It is not believable that Catholic Hospitals are referring developmentally disabled unborn children to an abortion mill because none of the witnesses or other facts are available. **FALSE**

FACTS It is noteworthy that SSM VP McGruden didn't even do what Aberayana Moore (whose account is one of 16 he denies) did: **she offers a SWORN AFFIDAVIT of her account of the treatment she received at the hands of his SSM doctors.**

Again keep in mind, SSM asks us to discount over 16 witnesses, including Aberayana, reporting 17 different instances of SSM Maternal and Fetal Care departments in at least 4 of its hospitals direct referring developmentally disabled unborn children to an abortion mill to be killed. As reported by the Knights of Columbus and the Archdiocese of St. Louis, SSM VP McGruden's report to the Knights of Columbus and the Archdiocese claimed to have cleared **ALL** accusations against SSM, including Cardinal Glennon. It was those over 16 different witnesses whose individual reports over the past 3 years uncovered this scandal which led to this moment. It was their **eye witness reports** that implicated SSM in particular in abortion referrals for developmentally disabled unborn children who were sent there by SSM Maternal and Fetal Care department to be killed. It is their eye witness reports, every one of them that SSM insists we are to discount. Every one of the them are lying but SSM VP McGruden is telling the truth?

Second, Aberayana Moore, one of those eye witnesses (Baby Kaliyah, #2 in the original report) when approached confirmed that SSM VP McGruden did not interview her for his investigation. Aberayana, the one readily available witness is completely ignored. How is that possible?

The one witness who has now added a sworn affidavit to her original report.

Will those who discount this mother swear as she has?

So we are asked to ignore the available AND discount the unavailable eye witnesses? What kind of "investigation" does that?

Third, Aberayana made public for all to see her actual patient file from the day SSM doctors attempted to coerce her into aborting her baby. Insisting she wanted her name left on the document. She also recently signed releases for SSM to directly release her patient record from that day to the Archdiocese of St. Louis to allow them to circumvent SSM's tactics for at least one of the babies involved. Aberayana said she released the record with her name noted because she wanted to honor her child, who SSM doctors repeatedly tried to get her to change her mind and instead go back to the Hope(less) abortion mill to have her killed. Keep in mind that patient file is still publicly available for all to see (remains attached to the original 28 page report of this scandal). In that file you will read SSM doctors, in **their own words**

- refer to the violent act of abortionists as a "treatment option"
- consistently use the language of abortionists referring to abortion as "termination"
- confirm they "**reviewed**" abortion with "the patient"
- that they "support" her "**IN**" the decision to have her baby killed
- and then add in that report that the couple,
 - who were referred to them **because they had changed their mind** about abortion
 - in fact were referred by Dr. Michael Dixon to aid in his care of Kalia and Aberayana leave that **FACT** out of their report and instead claim that she now wanted to abort the baby Aberayana had since named (Kaliah).

Aberayana literally (in her affidavit) swears that is a **bold face lie**.

Aberayana's affidavit (see the companion word file) also confirms it was the **SSM doctors'** mission that day, because they confirmed Baby Kaliyah was developmentally disabled, to convert her back to

aborting Kaliyah. It is that “lie” to use Aberayana’s word that motivated her to persist for over two years in seeking “justice for baby Kaliyah”.

Focusing on the affidavit Aberayana swore detailing the whole shocking affair (read it for yourself), we see in great detail how she was harassed repeatedly by both SSM doctors because she wouldn’t agree to abort baby Kaliyah. That they insisted repeatedly that abortion was “**the best option**” “**the best decision**”. Double teamed her to try to get her to change her mind. Left her and Ron in that room by themselves in a strange hospital to try to change their minds. And then how one doctor continued that harassment right down the hallway as they retreated from that nightmare. Aberayana’s SSM experience (which apparently passed muster in SSM’s in house “investigation”) gives us a look behind the curtain SSM uses to hide what actually goes on inside its Maternal and Fetal Care department.

Another glimpse behind that curtain is the recording of the conversation between SSM Maternal and Fetal Care department counselor Katie and John Ryan in which the former, when asked if her doctors are directly referring mothers to abortion mills falls strangely silent, never does answer that question, and instead says she will first need to check with her doctors before she can answer that question. Seriously? How is it possible that ANY Catholic hospital employee cannot easily and readily answer that question? Unless of course the answer is yes and that employee is too honest to lie, but wants to keep her job.

Then of course there is Katie’s failure to call back with the answer as she promised in that call, and the recording of the call when John Ryan calls back for that information and the SSM Maternal and Fetal Care department clerk when she realizes who it is talking over him in mid-sentence and hanging up on him.

Finally, is the decision of SSM to “investigate” **itself** and hide all the “evidence” behind the **FALSE** claim that federal law prohibits them from sharing that “evidence” seeming to take shelter in the concept of **plausible deniability**. How many files look just like Aberayana Moore’s and how far back does this scandal actually go? We will never know until an independent, outside, comprehensive and transparent real investigation is completed and steps taken to ensure what happened to these 16 babies (and how many more?) never happens again. And similar investigations are completed of all Catholic hospitals involved in the practice of testing unborn children for developmental disabilities.

This is the response SSM is STILL sending out to those who inquire about the scandal. Pay attention to the SSM VP “investigator” basing SSM’s refusal to provide even one shred of actual evidence on his completely **FALSE representation of Federal privacy laws. One might ask, so who is lying?**

From: McCruden, Patrick <Patrick.McCruden@ssmhealth.com>

Subject: Allegations against SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital

Please allow me to begin by saying how very much we appreciate your support – financial and otherwise – of SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital. Because of you, we are able to provide healing to tens of thousands of children each year. Our

clinicians and other dedicated employees simply could not do what they do, without you in their corner.

I understand you've recently encountered allegations that Cardinal Glennon providers have advised women they should terminate pregnancies. That is the sort of accusation we take very seriously. We have thoroughly investigated these claims and found them baseless. It's important to underscore one fundamental point: Neither abortion nor referral for abortion is permitted at SSM Health. It is prohibited within the Ethical and Religious Directives for Health Care Services, and is antithetical to who we are as an organization.

I won't speculate on the motives of a person or group who spread untruths about our Catholic children's hospital, or why this same person has similarly attacked other Catholic hospitals in the past. Federal privacy laws, which provide important safeguards for our patients' personal information, prevent us from providing evidence that would refute these false accusations. I can say, however, that these allegations could undermine the legacy and integrity of Cardinal Glennon's Catholic Mission of healing. When that legacy is damaged, one potential outcome is reduction of donor funding. In that sense, you could say these false allegations threaten the sustainability of Catholic pediatric care in our community, which I consider unconscionable. That is why your continued support is so vital to our continued service.

SSM Health will continue to educate our physicians and staff about the Ethical and Religious Directives to ensure care in accordance with our Mission and Catholic heritage and principles. Thank you for doing your part to preserve that care. If there is anything I can do to be of further help, please don't hesitate to call or email.

Peace,

Patrick