

# Jail for 'mastermind' behind late abortions clinic

Morín, a gynaecologist originally from Peru, was found guilty of involvement in carrying out 11 counts of illegal abortion in 2007. He was sentenced to 18 months in jail, the same term handed down to Pascual Javier Ramón, a psychiatrist at the clinic.

The court was told that psychiatric reports were "false or simulated". Reports of a raid on the clinic as long ago as 2007 claimed machines "to grind

## Doctor who treated British women referred by charity brought to justice 10 years after *Telegraph* exposé

By Robert Mendick CHIEF REPORTER and James Badcock in Madrid

A DOCTOR who ran a Spanish clinic exposed by *The Sunday Telegraph* for performing hundreds of late abortions on pregnant British women has been found guilty of carrying out illegal terminations.

Dr Carlos Morín finally faces jail for a scandal first brought to public attention by this newspaper more than a decade ago. After almost five years of protracted court proceedings, a judge in Spain sentenced Morín and a psychiatrist who worked with him to 18 months in jail. Nine other members of staff, including Morín's wife, Maria Luisa Duran, were acquitted.

Evidence supplied by *The Telegraph* helped to convict Morín. His clinic, Ginemedex in Barcelona, had been "fully recommended" by the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS), the NHS-funded charity, to British women wanting late abortions without a medical reason.

Two *Sunday Telegraph* journalists, posing as a couple, secretly filmed staff at the clinic admitting it offered abortions for women as late as 30 weeks pregnant. Under British law, abortions without medical justification must be

carried out before 24 weeks of pregnancy. Under Spanish law at the time, the limit was 22 weeks.

The *Telegraph* investigation discovered the BPAS, the leading provider of abortions in the UK, as a matter of "policy" was referring pregnant women to the Spanish clinic if they were beyond the UK's 24-week legal cut-off. Ginemedex staff were caught on film and audio offering to abort the healthy 26-week-old foetus of an undercover reporter.

The clinic charged women on a sliding scale depending on the stage of pregnancy. Women at 24 weeks were charged €2,780 (£2,260), rising by about €200 a week. Women at 26 weeks were charged €3,200.

A judge investigating Morín had accused the doctor of enjoying "enormous income levels" and a "high standard of living".

Morín lived in Sant Cugat del Vallés, a village outside Barcelona, in a villa next to a golf course. The house had a large garden, pool and Jacuzzi, and Morín is said to have driven luxury cars including a Ferrari. In 2005, accounts showed the clinic's annual turnover was about £1 million.

Judge José Antonio Rodríguez ruled Morín was the "sole true director and mastermind behind all of the activity that took place in his clinics", therefore acquitting the other gynaecologists who carried out many of the abortions.

They were manipulated by Morín, who ensured that the paperwork appeared to be in order before each abortion took place, said the judge.

foetuses" were found hidden at the clinic and at another run by Morín. The machines were connected to drains.

The legal action was brought jointly by the public prosecutor and a private organisation, E-Cristians, a Catholic association near Barcelona, which says it was appalled after reading the *Telegraph* investigation.

Josep Miró, E-Cristians' president, said: "We felt that this was a scandalous

situation. Morín got rich on the basis of practising this kind of abortion, because with normal legal procedures people don't make so much money. It is the first time there has been a conviction in Spain for illegal abortion."

Morín was initially acquitted in 2013 and at the time he insisted he was the victim of a witch hunt. "Falsities were dressed up like truths. I was a scapegoat," he said at the time.

But a retrial was ordered on appeal over concerns that crucial evidence supplied by one of the *Telegraph* reporters and a Danish film crew, which followed up with its own clandestine investigation, had been wrongly ruled inadmissible. The guilty verdicts were returned earlier this month.

The BPAS was insistent at the time it had broken no laws in referring British women to the clinic for late abortions.

Ann Furedi, BPAS chief executive, said at the time: "There is nothing we are doing that is unlawful. We are simply providing women with international contacts to clinics that can provide them with abortion services.

"We are informing women who come to us that there are circumstances in which we can't lawfully provide them with an abortion and provide them with information that they can receive treatment in other countries."

The BPAS says on its website it "takes care" of more than 65,000 women a year and "nearly all ... have their care paid for by the NHS".

Josephine Quintavalle, a founder member of the ProLife Alliance who was highly critical of the arrangement when it was exposed in 2004, said: "As the abortion lobby in our country continues its relentless campaign for decriminalisation, it is encouraging to see the tenacity of the Spanish pro-life movement assisted by other European pro-life groups, who have at last been rewarded with a definitive conviction against Dr Carlos Morín for the illegal killing of late-term unborn children."

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