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Dentist charged with molesting patients

West Bloomfield man linked to four cases over four years.

By Mike Martindale
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WATERFORD TOWNSHIP — A West Bloomfield Township dentist faces charges he drugged and molested female patients, including a co-worker, while working on their teeth.

The 40-year-old is expected to be charged today with fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct in four incidents at his Waterford Township office over the past four years.

The dentist could not be

reached Thursday and police declined to comment. His attorney, Richard Lustig of Birmingham, confirmed the dentist would appear in court today on charges he described as "unethical touching by a physician."

"He is one of the most professional people I have ever met, and this was all started by a disgruntled worker," Lustig said. "He denies these charges and is very upset. We're also happy we will finally have an opportunity to confront them. I'm confident we'll clear it all up."

James O. Elliott, a Bloomfield Hills attorney who represents two of the women involved, said the man became one woman's

dentist after he took over a retiring dentist's practice.

The most recent complaint involves a 36-year-old Commerce Township woman who was having crown work done on Aug. 20. She received intravenous doses of two painkillers that prompted a dream-like state, Elliott said.

"That evening, she called him because she felt deathly ill," the attorney continued. "He called her back on two occasions and prescribed another medication to help her get through the night.

"Several days later, she got a call from a Waterford Township detective who wanted to speak to her about the dentist."

Elliott said the detective told

the woman he had information that while she was sedated a medical assistant saw the dentist groping and fondling the woman's breasts under her surgical bib.

"The assistant said the dentist had a habit of having unnecessary X-rays taken of certain female patients and took advantage of sedated patients after assistants left the room to develop the images," Elliott said.

The attorney said a 42-year-old assistant who has worked at the office for more than 20 years confronted the dentist after he allegedly groped her during a dental exam a year earlier. He apologized, Elliott said.

"She and the other assistant dis-

cussed his behavior and decided to keep an eye on him," Elliott said. "When he sent an assistant off to do X-rays on Aug. 20, he was not aware the other woman was sitting in a room next to the exam room."

The second assistant, employed at the office six years, walked into the room and reportedly observed inappropriate conduct. Both women have since quit, and one reported the incident to police.

"We have since learned of two other patients who complained to the dental office and workers about his behavior," Elliott said.

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