

March 27, 2018

IIU concludes investigation into death while in WPS custody

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into the death of a 20-year-old man that occurred following a struggle with police at a home in the Garden City area of Winnipeg. It has concluded that no charge should be laid against any officer.

On February 12, 2017, members of the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) responded to a man who wanted his intoxicated son removed from his residence. Police arrived to find the man in a state of excited delirium and acting strangely. A struggle with the man ensued, requiring the use of pepper spray by the officers and a sedative administered by Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Services personnel. Once outside the residence, his vital signs were again taken by paramedics and it was determined he was in cardiac arrest. CPR was commenced and he was transported to Seven Oaks General Hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

An autopsy report revealed the cause of the man's death to be atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (plaque buildup inside arteries) and noted three of his heart arteries were almost completely blocked and heart disease was present. Other significant conditions contributing to his death were chronic alcoholism, cardiomegaly (an enlarged heart) and physiological stress due to a struggle with law enforcement personnel.

In his report on the investigation, IIU civilian director Zane Tessler noted the aggressive nature and bizarre behaviour of the man, coupled with the extremely high levels of alcohol in his system, supports the conclusion that he was in excited delirium at the time he was combative with WPS officers. He found there was no evidence that any officer used force that was excessive and unnecessary in these circumstances.

The chief medical examiner for Manitoba has called for an inquest with respect to this death pursuant to *The Fatality Inquiries Act*. Other issues from this incident will be considered in those proceedings.

The civilian director's complete report is available online at www.iumanitoba.ca. The details of this investigation were first announced on February 14, 2017.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
Barbara Czech
Communications, Independent Investigation Unit
204-803-9644
bczech@mts.net

Information on the IIU can be found at www.iumanitoba.ca or at [www.twitter.com/IIUManitoba](https://twitter.com/IIUManitoba)