

December 03, 2020

IIU concludes investigation into death while in police custody

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into the death of a suspect that occurred at a police station in Winnipeg.

According to a notification received from the Winnipeg Police Service, on April 16, 2019 at approximately 7:15 p.m., police arrested a 56-year-old male on Main Street in relation to two allegations of assault. The male was transported to North District station on Hartford Avenue, where he was placed in a holding room while officers processed him on those charges. At 10:15 p.m., officers entered the holding room and found the male unresponsive. The male was transported to hospital in critical condition but was pronounced deceased a short time later.

As this matter concerned the in-custody death of a person, which may have resulted from the actions of a police officer(s), IIU assumed responsibility for this mandatory investigation in accordance with section 65 of The Police Services Act (PSA). A team of IIU investigators was assigned to this investigation.

Further, in accordance with section 70(1) of the PSA, the IIU was required to seek the appointment of a civilian monitor as this matter involved the death of a person. IIU requested the Manitoba Police Commission to appoint a civilian monitor.

IIU investigators interviewed six members of the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service (WFPS) and reviewed information including:

- WPS briefing and prisoner injury reports
- WPS call history files and officers' notes, reports and narratives
- prisoner log sheet
- FIS photos
- 911 emergency calls
- in-custody death report
- officer and dispatch communications
- WPS policy on Death or Injury Non-Member/In-Custody Death and Intoxicated Persons
- autopsy, pathology and toxicology reports on the deceased

The civilian director did not find sufficient, or any, evidence to support a conclusion that any of the police officers actions, or inactions, did anything to transgress the limits of care prescribed by the criminal law in the circumstances of this case.

The investigation is now complete and the matter is closed. The civilian director's complete report is available online at www.iiumanitoba.ca.

The details of this investigation were first announced on April 17, 2019.

There will also be an inquest into this death, as required under the Fatality Inquiries Act.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
Communications Services Manitoba
Telephone: 204-945-3765

Information on the IIU can be found at www.iumanitoba.ca or at www.twitter.com/IIUManitoba