

IIU investigation concludes into serious injury during WPS arrest

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into a serious incident that occurred on July 19, 2021. On Oct. 21, 2021, Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) advised the IIU it had received correspondence from the Law Enforcement Review Agency on Oct. 18, 2021, indicating a male suffered confirmed fractures to his ribs, clavicle, and scapula as well as a collapsed lung as a result of an arrest.

The IIU obtained various pieces of evidence including audio files, 911 calls, WPS service call records, officer notes, Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) reports, medical records from Grace Hospital and Health Sciences Centre, and Winnipeg Remand Centre records. Interviews were conducted with the affected person, three civilian witnesses, three paramedics and two witness officers. One subject officer also provided a statement.

On July 19, 2021, the affected person was involved in two incidents while possibly suffering from methamphetamine psychosis. The first incident occurred shortly after 11 a.m. when the affected person forced his way into a residence and was hit repeatedly with a metal bar, resulting in an injury to his head and forearm. The WFPS responded and noted the injuries. Further medical treatment was refused. It is unclear if the affected person suffered other injuries as a result of this incident.

At 1:22 p.m., WPS responded to a 911 call regarding the affected person who had forced his way into a second residence belonging to his ex-common law partner. He was observed acting strangely and possibly suffering from a methamphetamine psychosis. Police officers responded to a 911 call and found the male face down on a mattress in an upstairs bedroom. WFPS treated and transported the affected person to Grace Hospital, where he was cleared and then held in custody at the WPS central processing unit.

On July 21, 2021, after being transferred to the Winnipeg Remand Centre and approximately 48 hours after his arrest, the affected person was transported to Health Sciences Centre (HSC),

where he complained of being assaulted by police at the time of his arrest. Upon examination, he was found to be suffering from broken ribs and a collapsed lung.

The IIU concluded that while it was clear the affected person had injuries, when and how those injuries occurred is unclear. During the first incident, the affected person refused to allow the paramedics to lift his shirt and refused to be brought to the hospital. It is unclear whether the affected person suffered injuries to other parts of his body as a result of being hit by the metal bar. Despite the affected person advising his injuries were due to the police assaulting him during the second incident, his recollections surrounding the event are incomplete. Witnesses reported strange behaviour from the affected person and he admitted to consuming methamphetamine the day before the incident. The affected person did not complain about the mistreatment he received from police to the paramedics at the hospital, when he was taken into custody at the WPS central processing unit or at the Winnipeg Remand Centre. A doctor at HSC stated the most responsible diagnosis for the injuries sustained is that they resulted from a fall.

The IIU's investigation found that based on all the circumstances, there were no reasonable grounds to believe that the affected person's injuries were a result of the subject officers' actions. Further, Manitoba Prosecution Service has provided their opinion that they would not authorize charges as there is no reasonable likelihood of conviction.

Therefore, the matter is now closed, and the civilian director's complete report is on the IIU website at www.iiumanitoba.ca.

The details of the investigation were first announced on Oct. 22, 2021.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
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Information on the IIU can be found at www.iiumanitoba.ca or at www.twitter.com/IIUManitoba