

June 14, 2017

IIU concludes investigation into death of man found in Brandon hotel

On May 26, 2017 the Independent Investigation Unit of Manitoba (IIU) concluded its investigation into the death of a man in a Brandon hotel room and his interaction with police a few hours earlier. It has determined no charges should be laid against either of the two involved officers.

On the evening of January 10, 2017, Brandon Police Service (BPS) received a call from a woman saying she believed her husband to be suicidal, based on statements he had made and text messages he had sent to her.

Police contacted the man and arranged to meet him at a parking lot. Two officers spent considerable time meeting with, talking to, and assessing the man at the parking lot. During this conversation, the man repeatedly stated he had no intention of harming himself and the officers concluded they did not have grounds to arrest him under the *Mental Health Act*.

The following morning, the man was found deceased in a local guestroom by hotel staff. The post mortem examination noted the cause of death was suicide.

The primary issue for IIU investigators was whether members of the BPS did anything, or failed to do anything, during their contact with the man that may have contributed to his death.

In his report on the investigation, IIU civilian director Zane Tessler wrote that “police officers are not to be judged with the benefit of hindsight” and the primary question was whether the officers’ conduct was reasonable in the circumstances. He determined the two officers had sufficient information available to them to conclude that grounds did not exist to detain the man.

The civilian director’s complete report on this incident can be found online at www.iiumanitoba.ca.

The details of the investigation were first released on January 13, 2017.

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