

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



TIMOTHY J. CRUZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MAIN OFFICE:
32 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Tel: (508) 584-8120
Fax: (508) 586-3578

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CONTACT: BETH STONE
(508) 584-8120

INVESTIGATION CLOSED IN DEATH OF SAMUEL DUNN

BROCKTON – Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced that his office has concluded an 11-months-long investigation into the overdose death of a man in a transport van awaiting court-ordered treatment at Bridgewater State Hospital.

On January 7, 2016 at approximately 3:00 a.m., State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office responded to the Bridgewater State Hospital facility immediately after being advised by Bridgewater Police of the death of Samuel M. Dunn (DOB: 06/05/86) of Lynn.

In the immediate hours following Mr. Dunn's death, DA Cruz initiated what resulted in an 11-months long, exhaustive investigation headed by prosecutors, State Police Detectives and the Grand Jury. As part of the investigation, dozens of witness interviews were conducted, including those from Bridgewater State Hospital, Anna Jaques Hospital in Newburyport, the Essex County Sheriff's Department and family members of Mr. Dunn. Video surveillance was viewed, medical records and medical experts were consulted, evidence was analyzed and procedures and protocols involving prisoner transport were reviewed. Our Office obtained autopsy results from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner who determined that Mr. Dunn died of opiate intoxication. All evidence gathered was presented to the Grand Jury. Ultimately, no one was charged criminally in connection with Mr. Dunn's death.

Investigation

On January 3, 2016, Mr. Dunn was admitted to Anna Jaques Hospital in Newburyport after reporting that he was feeling generally unsafe. Mr. Dunn, after being medically cleared, was held on a Section 12 while hospital officials made attempts to find treatment for him at a secure mental health facility. Over the next three days, Mr. Dunn remained at Anna Jaques, where hospital staff noted behavioral and demeanor changes in Mr. Dunn.

At approximately 10 a.m. on January 6, 2016, a security officer with Anna Jaques Hospital observed Mr. Dunn with what appeared to be blue medical glove fingers that

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contained some sort of substance. Hospital security attempted to confiscate the medical glove fingers from Mr. Dunn and a struggle ensued. Hospital security reported seeing Mr. Dunn ingest some of the medical glove pieces and flush some down the toilet.

Additionally on January 6, 2016, an acquaintance who accompanied Mr. Dunn when he was admitted to Anna Jaques, contacted hospital staff and reported that they believed Mr. Dunn had secreted drugs inside his rectum. Hospital security checked Mr. Dunn and found no evidence of drugs. Mr. Dunn's vital signs were monitored by hospital personnel for several hours while staff prepared a Section 35 Petition and arranged for Mr. Dunn's transport to Newburyport District Court. There, a court clinician opined that Mr. Dunn was under the influence of an unknown substance and in need of treatment at a secure facility and the court ordered that Mr. Dunn be transported to the MASAC facility in Bridgewater. Deputies from the Essex County Sheriff's Department picked up Dunn and brought him to Middleton House of Corrections where he was processed. The van in which Mr. Dunn was transported made one stop at Walpole State Prison for a prisoner exchange before arriving at the MASAC facility in Bridgewater.

After arrival at the MASAC facility in Bridgewater, a disturbance within the facility and lockdown order prevented Essex County Sheriff's Department deputies from ushering Mr. Dunn and another man in the transport van inside the facility. Essex guards reported that Mr. Dunn had been asleep and snoring in the back of the transport vehicle since they had left Middleton. While waiting entry to the MASAC facility in the van outside the Bridgewater facility, Mr. Dunn stopped snoring. An Essex deputy from the front seat exited the vehicle to check on Mr. Dunn and determined him unresponsive and immediately contacted Bridgewater Hospital personnel who contacted emergency medical personnel. EMTs on scene performed CPR on Mr. Dunn and treated him with Narcan before he was transported to Morton Hospital in Taunton where he was pronounced dead at 1:46 a.m.

On January 7, 2016, the state Office of the Chief Medical Examiner conducted an autopsy on Mr. Dunn and determined that the cause of death to be opiate intoxication. The ME reported that Mr. Dunn's blood and gastric contents contained extremely high levels of heroin and open blue medical glove fingers were also found in his gastric contents.

DA Cruz said, "We are confident in the hard work our Office and State Police put into the thorough investigation into Mr. Dunn's tragic death."

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