

FROM: :

TO: Department of Corrections Inspection Unit
1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200
St. Paul, MN 55108
651-361-7200; FAX: 651-642-0314

DATE: September 11, 2018

RE: Complaint regarding Beltrami County Jail

Please see the attached report I sent to the Ramsey County Medical Examiner on September 5, 2018.

In summary, I reported that on August 31 I was to be training with Dr. Todd Leonard, physician and owner of MeND Correctional Care, at the Beltrami County Jail. Dr. Leonard informed me that he wouldn't be able to make it that morning, so I would have to round on my own.

When I arrived at the facility, I was informed by the medical tech and RN that I would have to see an inmate who was faking being paralyzed. (His other symptoms, which were shared with me at this time, are included in my medical examiner's report.) The med tech and RN explained that the jail administrator vetoed him going to the ER the night before because she believed he was a flight risk.

As I reported, I was brought to the inmate's cell by the RN, followed by a correctional staff worker. On the way we stopped at control, where the other officers were speaking very negatively about the inmate, also believing he was faking his situation.

The conditions in which I found the inmate were disturbing. My report gives all details, including that when I directed that the inmate's diaper and clothes be changed, the officers refused to help. The RN later had to call her family to bring another set of clothes to the jail for her, as her clothes were full of urine and sweat after we changed the inmate ourselves.

After I advised staff that the inmate was to go to the ER, the officers initially were not going to help get the inmate into the wheelchair. The RN had to go to control and demand that officers help us lift him into the chair.

I am submitting this report because the conditions in which I found the inmate and the officers' response to his medical condition and the condition of the cell were neglectful.

Thank you for your attention.

FROM:

TO: Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office
300 East University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55130
651-266-1700; FAX: 651-266-1730

DATE: September 5, 2018

RE: Case # 2018-2445

The following report is to document my conversation with the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office earlier today.

I have been an employee with the company MeND Healthcare for approximately three weeks, beginning in mid-August. Technically I am still in training. On August 31, I should have been with my boss and MeND owner, physician Dr. Todd Leonard, as I was in training, but Dr. Leonard told me he could not make it to Beltrami that morning, and I would have to go by myself.

When I arrived at the Beltrami County jail, the med tech and the RN advised me there was an inmate who was faking being paralyzed and that I still would have to take a look at him. They told me he was even faking being incontinent and that was why he was wearing adult diapers. I reviewed his chart and noticed that he was consistently hypertensive in the 150s and 160s over 100s and was tachycardic. An ECG had been done on, I believe, August 30. The ECG read abnormal and inferior infarct. I personally don't have experience reading ECGs, so I asked the RN if Dr. Leonard had seen the ECG. She told me that she read the report to Dr. Leonard over the telephone, and he told her that inferior infarct is normal and the ECG was of no concern. I asked her if the patient was on any medication for hypertension. She told me he was on Lisinopril on the outside. I asked her why he was not on anything currently, and she told me he wasn't on any medication because he was saying that he was having trouble swallowing.

The RN told me that on August 30 Dr. Leonard advised the RN to send Hardel to the local emergency room, but the jail administrator vetoed it, saying, after she had listened to Hardel's phone conversations with his family, that she believed he was a flight risk.

I was brought to Hardel's cell by the RN, followed by a correctional staff worker. On the way we stopped at control, where the other officers were speaking very negatively about Hardel, saying he was faking his situation.

When I got to Hardel's cell I was overwhelmed by the stench. It smelled heavily of urine and sweat. Hardel was lying on his back on the floor. He was on a mat full of urine and drenched in sweat. He was wearing a diaper that was soaked with urine, the urine then soaking the mattress pad underneath him. When I looked at Hardel I immediately noticed that the right side of his mouth was drooping. When he spoke to me, his words were slightly slurred. He looked at me and asked me to please believe him that

something was wrong. He told me no one was believing him. He told me he felt numb from his waist down. He said he had pain in his back. He asked if he could have his diaper changed and have clean clothes. He said the officers were refusing to change his diaper and clothes or help him clean up. I asked him what the last time was he ate or drank anything. He told me that he could not eat because something was wrong with his swallowing. He said his throat felt weird and that it was difficult to swallow. He said the day before I saw him he was able to drink two small containers of apple juice with assistance from the RN.

The RN was getting Hardel's vital signs with the machine as I was speaking with him. He was tachycardic with a heart rate of 132. His blood pressure was hypertensive; I cannot remember the exact numbers. His O2 saturation was either 83% or 84%. I said that he needed to go to the emergency room immediately and that I was concerned that he had had a stroke. I was told the only way he was going to the hospital was in a deputy vehicle with armed officers.

While we waited for the correctional staff, I directed that Hardel be changed into clean clothes and that his diaper be changed. The RN started to put on a new diaper and new clothes. The correctional staff would not help change the inmate. I was assessing him and noticed that his body was cold, but he was extremely diaphoretic. He had no Babinski reflex. His grasp reflex was weak, especially on the right side. I started to help the RN put new clothes on, which was difficult as it was like moving dead weight. When rolling him slightly, Hardel was crying out in pain. The officers at some point brought a wheelchair for Hardel. The RN was upset that the officers were not there to help lift him into the wheelchair so she went down to control and to ask officers to help lift him into the chair. The wheelchair did not have rests for his legs.

When Hardel was getting changed into clean clothes I remember him saying to please don't let the officers touch him. Hardel also was crying. He had tears running from his eyes when he pleaded with me to get him help. He told me that he was scared. He stated that he wanted to speak with his family.

That night I had trouble sleeping as I thought about the conditions in which I found Hardel. I contemplated as to how and to whom I should report it. I was just grateful that he got to the hospital. That was Friday evening (August 31), and the long holiday weekend followed.

I did not find out that Hardel had passed away until yesterday (Tuesday, September 4). I was training at another jail with Dr. Leonard. He was sitting across from me as we were reviewing charts. He received a phone call, and I heard him tell whomever he was speaking with that there had been a death in the Beltrami jail. My heart sunk because I knew it was probably Hardel.

When Dr. Leonard got off the phone he told me that he was talking with his attorney. He told me that he was sorry that he had forgotten to tell me Hardel had died on Sunday night. He told me that Hardel had been medically cleared from the emergency room. He told me that they did a thorough examination and a CT scan, which showed nothing.

I told Dr. Leonard that I disagreed that there was nothing wrong. I told him that vital signs and ECGs don't lie—both of which were consistently abnormal with Hardel. I also told him that I am very confident when it comes to my clinical judgement and that something was very wrong with Hardel; he was very sick. Dr. Leonard then told me to not jump to conclusions. He then said that jumping to conclusions could jeopardize his company.

Dr. Leonard told me that he was getting calls over the weekend from the RN who was at Beltrami, saying that Hardel was deteriorating and having difficulties with his swallowing, but because Hardel had been cleared at the hospital, Dr. Leonard thought that Hardel could wait until after the holiday to be reassessed.

Dr. Leonard then said that as far as he was concerned, Hardel gave himself a blood clot from faking his illness. He said it was likely he killed himself or even stuck a sock down his throat. Dr. Leonard then spoke to the RN from Beltrami on his cellphone as he sat across from me. He was asking her to read her reports from Hardel's hospital visit and asking if there were any ECGs that were performed during Hardel's hospital stay. He then told her to be very careful with what she would say if she was interviewed by any investigators. He told her what he told me, to not jump to any conclusions. He told her that as far as he was concerned Hardel's death was from a blood clot he gave to himself after faking his illness, putting a sock or something down his throat, or from some illegal substance that he got from other inmates in the jail. After having her read her reports over the phone, he told her that she had his permission to hand the medical record over to the jail administrator.

I made the telephone call to your office this morning and am filing this report because I feel it is ethically my obligation to do so. I hope something like this will not happen again.

Thank you.