



Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office

Name: Simon Bernstein

Case Number: 12-0913

Prepared By: Heron Ruiz, Forensic Investigator

On Thursday, September 13, 2012 at about 8:15 a.m., Ted Bernstein called the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office to request an autopsy on his father, Simon Bernstein, whom he said died at Delray Medical Center earlier in the morning. He said that his father is 76 years old with a history of Hepatitis, heart disease with previous open heart surgery and stents and hypertension. His father was admitted to the hospital.

I told Mr. Bernstein that the Medical Examiner would not assume jurisdiction of this case because the death did not appear to be due to anything other than natural causes. He then said that he was requesting an autopsy because after talking to his father's personal assistant, he believed that his father's younger girlfriend may have overdosed his father.

I told Mr. Bernstein to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and to report the case.

At 9:00 a.m., Sergeant Matthew Castelli (ID: 6382) of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office called the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office to report the case. He said that he contacted the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Violent Crimes Division (VCD) and that they declined to assign a Detective to this case. He said that Deputy Vince Haugh would complete a report. I told him to fax a copy of the report to the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office. I told him also to have the hospital fax Mr. Bernstein's medical records to the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office for review and to have the body placed in the hospital morgue.

I received the medical records from the hospital. The records state that on September 12, 2012, shortly after 10:00 a.m., Mr. Bernstein arrived at the hospital Emergency Room. He was alert and able to communicate. He reported that he suffered from fibromyalgia being treated with Prednisone. He complained of generalized weakness and dizziness since September 7, 2012. His family said that he was disoriented and that he collapsed while trying to get up. The hospital staff diagnosed him with a Myocardial Infarction and congestive heart failure.

I discussed the case with Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Michael Bell. He told me that have the body transported to the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office for further review. I contacted Mr. Bernstein and told him that the medical examiner would do an autopsy on his father's body. I instructed him to arrange services with a funeral for release of the body.

I dispatched Elite Body Removal Service to the hospital on September 14, 2012 at 8:40 a.m.

Deputy Vince Haugh sent a report to the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner. The report states that on September 13, 2012 he went to Mr. Bernstein's (decedent) home at 7020 Lions Head Lane, Boca Raton, Florida, 33496. He met with Ted Bernstein. Ted told him that his father, Simon Bernstein was taken to Delray Medical Center at about 10:00 a.m., September 12, 2012 and that he died in the early morning, September 13, 2012. He said his father's caretaker, Rachel Walker told him that his father's girlfriend, Maritz Puccio might have given his father a larger than prescribed dose of Hydrocodone and an Ambien. Ted voiced his concern at the hospital and the doctors told him that they did not suspect foul play in this case and that they would not request an autopsy.

Ms. Walker reported that the decedent suffered from Polymyalgia, Hepatitis C and had open heart surgery. The decedent recently started taking Prednisone, which affected his mental stability. She said that she found the decedent on the couch when she arrived at his home on September 12, 2012 at about 8:30 a.m. Ms. Puccio arrived home a short while later and apparently there was some disagreement on whether they should take him to the hospital. Ms. Walker ultimately decided to take him to the hospital. Ms. Walker said that the decedent received a prescription of 100 Hydrocodone pills on September 7, 2012 and that she believed that Ms. Puccio was giving him more than the prescribed doses. Ms. Walker said that she believed there were only about 30 pills left in the bottle. Deputy Haugh counted the pills and found 90.5 remaining in the bottle. He concluded that the decedent was most likely not being over medicated.

Deputy Haugh talked to Mr. Bernstein's other son, Eliot Bernstein. Eliot reported that he was out to dinner with his father and Ms. Puccio on September 8, 2012 and that his father asked Ms. Puccio for one of her Ambien's to help him sleep. Ms. Puccio refused to give him the Ambien leading to a brief argument.

Deputy Haugh collected Mr. Bernstein's medications>

1. Prednisone (5mg), 2 times daily
2. Benicar (20mg), 1 daily
3. Cartia (180mg), 2 times daily
4. Clopidogrel (75mg), 1 time daily
5. Isoborbide Mononitrate (30mg), 2 times daily
6. Pantopravole (40mg), 1 time daily
7. Ranexa (500mg), 2 times daily
8. Bayer aspirin (81mg)
9. Q-var (40mg) puff two daily
10. Serevant (1 puff), two times daily
11. Lyrica (50mg), 1 time daily
12. Vitamin D (D3), 1 daily
13. Homocysteine Formula (b625mg), folic acid

Nothing Further at this time