
POLICE CONDUCT OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
Case Summary Data #10
July 2014

OVERVIEW

Complainant was staying in a hotel. Complainant's daughter called police reporting that Complainant was suicidal and that she heard gunshots coming from the hotel room. Officers 1 and 2 arrived at the hotel. Assisting squads had already searched the room and could not locate a weapon. Complainant alleges that when the officers discussed the incident with her, she explained that her daughter was mentally ill with a history of making false reports and living in a group home. Complainant alleges she told the officers to contact the group home, and they did not. Officers 1 and 2 took Complainant to HCMC crisis and placed her on a mental health despite any actual evidence to indicate that she was experiencing mental health issues. Complainant also supplied a note from HCMC confirming that she had no mental health issues nor a mental health history and that the group home confirmed that her daughter has a history of false reports.

THE COMPLAINT

1. Violation of the Policy and Procedure Manual: That Officers 1 and 2 took Complainant to HCMC when she was not experiencing mental health issues.

OPCR AND MPD POLICIES

1. OPCR Ord. § 172.20(8) Violation of the P&P Manual
2. 5-105(3) PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT: Officers shall use reasonable judgment in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. They need to weigh the consequences of their actions.

COMPLAINT PROCESSING

Complainant filed a written complaint with the OPCR. Reports were obtained. After checking the Officer's disciplinary history, the joint supervisors determined that the remaining allegation, if true, would constitute an A-level violation. Accordingly, the case was sent for coaching.

EVIDENCE

1. Complainant filed a written complaint with the Office detailing allegations.
2. Complainant submitted a portion of her medical records.
3. Visinet logs were obtained.
4. Police Reports were obtained.
5. Coaching documents were submitted to the precinct supervisor.
6. Final approved coaching documents were returned to OPCR.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Complaint

Complainant stated that she rented a motel room with her daughter. Complainant next stated that she told her daughter to go back to her group home, and the daughter complied. Complainant alleges that she went to sleep and awoke to her phone ringing and a loud knock on at the door. Complainant answered the door and alleges that an officer told her that she had a gun and that there was gun shots. Complainant alleged that "one after another [officers] started

throwing clothes out of the suit case on the floor walking on them.” Complainant alleges that she explained that her daughter was mentally ill and has a “history of making up stories.” Complainant alleges that the officers would not listen to her. Complainant alleges that the officers took her to the hospital and told staff that she was suicidal and “took a large amount of pills.”

Medical Records

Complainant submitted one page of her medical records from the night of the incident. They state that she was diagnosed with a “mood disorder.” The service provider noted that Complainant “does not have a mental health history and she is not having any thoughts of harming herself or anyone else.” The provider noted that she was not experiencing audio or visual hallucinations. The provider contacted Complainant’s daughter’s group home and verified that her daughter had mental health problems. The provider stated, “Please consider giving her [Complainant] another chance as she does not have anywhere else to go and this is somewhere that she was hoping to stay until she got back on her feet again.”

Visinet Reports

Visinet reports indicate that eight officers were assigned to an emotionally disturbed person call. The call was from an unknown “passer by.” Complainant’s daughter then called after EMS and Fire were assigned. The daughter told MECC that her mom made her leave the room and then she heard a shot. The daughter also stated that her mother had taken pills and threatened suicide. The daughter told officers to meet her at the motel so she could guide them to the location. EMS and multiple squads arrived.

The next line indicates that there was no shooting and Fire and EMS were canceled. Officers checked complainant and her daughter through the dispatch system and notified MECC that they intended to transport

Police Reports

The police report contains one supplement by one of the officers who brought Complainant to HCMC.

Supplement by Officer 1

Officer 1 stated that he and Officer 2 arrived after other officers were already on the scene. He indicated that no gun was found, nor was there evidence of a gunshot.

Officer 1 talked to Complainant’s daughter. Officer 1 stated that the daughter reported that her mother began yelling, “I’m going to f*ck*ng shoot myself.” Complainant’s daughter claimed that her mother owns a gun. The daughter told Officer 1 that Complainant grabbed prescription medication and “chugg[ed] them from the bottle.” The daughter stated that her mother pushed her from the room, and “she swears she heard a gunshot.” Complainant’s daughter reportedly ran from the room and flagged down someone to call police.

Officer 1 stated that Officer 2 located four prescription pill bottles. The prescriptions were listed. Officer 1 concluded by stating that Complainant was transported to HCMC crisis on a mental health hold.

COACHING

Coaching documents were forwarded to the appropriate supervisor to complete. The supervisor submitted a memo to supplement the coaching document that details the steps taken to complete the coaching.

Supervisor Memo

The supervisor reported that he first attempted to contact the Complainant but received a message stating that her phone number was no longer in service. The supervisor could not locate an address for Complainant.

The supervisor next met with Officer 1 to discuss the complaint. Officer 1 told the supervisor that when they met Complainant, they had limited information. "They had a situation where two people (the complainant and her daughter) were each saying the other was mentally unstable and suicidal." The supervisor reported that Officer 1 determined that "it was best to have the complainant evaluated in person by trained mental health professionals." Officer 1 stated that "simply getting information from [Complainant's daughter's] group home about [Complainant's daughter's] mental health history would provide him with specific information about the complainant's current mental state." Officer 1 stated that "his over-riding concern was to assure that the complainant was not a danger to herself or others."

The supervisor stated that he provided coaching to Officer 1 "that it would have been helpful to include more details in the report of the incident explaining his reasoning for bringing the complainant to CIC for evaluation." The supervisor concludes his discussion of his conversation with Officer 1 by stating that Officer 1 "agreed with this and said that he would be certain to include these types of details in future Crisis Intervention reports."

The supervisor next met with Officer 2. Officer 2 stated that "it was a chaotic situation with both the complainant and her daughter making statements and accusations about each other's mental state and suicidal threats and state of mind." Officer 2 stated that Complainant was "very angry" and "he and his partner were not certain if the complainant was suicidal or not." Officer 2 stated that "hearing from the daughter's group home regarding her past history would not have helped them make an informed decision on the complainant's state of mind or if she had suicidal intentions." Officer 2 stated that in past crisis intervention training, he was advised that "when they are uncertain if a person they encounter is a danger to themselves they should error[sic.] on the side of caution and transport them to CIC so they can be evaluated by trained mental health professionals."

The supervisor repeated the coaching of Officer 1 with Officer 2, "that it would have been helpful to include more details in the report of the incident explaining his reasoning for bringing the complainant to CIC for evaluation." The supervisor stated that Officer 2 also "agreed with this and said that he would be certain to include these types of details in future Crisis Intervention reports."