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Elder Abuse Task Force investigating Beard Street adult foster care facility

By Laura Misjak | The Flint Journal

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Department of Human Services employees sit with adult foster care residents after they were dropped off at the Department of Human Services on Pierson Road in Flint.

FLINT, Michigan — Authorities are **investigating an adult foster care provider** after the deaths of two elderly women under her care.

A 72-year-old woman who weighed 64 lbs. when she died three weeks ago and a 92-year-old woman who died Tuesday were both under the care of Victoria Chapman, said Genesee County Sheriff Robert J. Pickell.

Neither Chapman nor her attorney, Gregory Bator, could be reached for comment Friday.

The Genesee County Elder Abuse Task Force has been looking into Chapman's activities after a complaint was lodged in October about an adult foster care home she owns on Beard Street in Flint, said Pickell.

The investigation intensified, however, after the two deaths.

Officials are trying to determine how the women died but Pickell said investigators believe the 92-year-old woman was not given regular medication before her death.

The 72-year-old under Chapman's care was at a home on Stanley Road in Mt. Morris Township when she died, said

Pickell.

The Stanley Road home was not licensed for adult foster care, said Pickell.

A Tuesday police search of the Chapman-owned home at 1325 Beard Street found that it was dirty, crawling with rodents and had trash scattered inside, said Pickell.

Friday, officials removed two people who Pickell said were under Chapman's care at the Beard Street home.

The elder abuse task force showed up to remove the pair Friday morning but found the house empty.

Two hours later, a caretaker who works with Chapman was arrested when she dropped the pair off outside of the Department of Human Services office on W. Pierson Road.

Pickell said the woman was booked for kidnapping because he said she took residents from the Beard Street facility for more than a day and without telling authorities their location.

She was released pending further investigation, Pickell said.

The two Beard Street residents were taken to Hurley Medical Center for treatment.

Pickell said the pair were the only ones known to be in Victoria Chapman's care at the Beard Street home.

A DHS employee made a recommendation to the DHS in October to close the Beard Street home, said Pickell.

DHS officials declined to comment because the agency currently has litigation pending against the Beard Street facility. A DHS hearing is scheduled in April to review the site's license.

In addition to searching the Beard Street home, the elder abuse task force on Tuesday also served search warrants on two adult foster care homes that Victoria Chapman owns in Pontiac and a Holly Township home that used to be operated as an adult foster care by Victoria Chapman's mother, Mary Chapman.

The Holly Township home was closed in 2005 and Mary Chapman's adult foster care license revoked after a state investigation found numerous instances of residents wandering away from the Holly Township home, including one where a resident died after being hit by a car, according to Journal files.

Mary Chapman was also ordered not to have contact with residents in another adult foster care home for up to 10 years, according to Journal files.

Adult foster care operators receive \$1,000 to \$10,000 a month from the state per patient, depending on the severity of the patient, Pickell said.

Roger Welsh, a Holly Township code enforcement officer, said squalid conditions were found in the Holly Township home.

"I just don't want anyone to be hurt in this," he said.

Pickell said the investigation into the Beard Street home and the Chapmans is ongoing.

"This is just coming to light," said Pickell.

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