

Paraplegic Allegedly Dumped On Skid Row

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(AP) A hospital van dropped off a paraplegic man on Skid Row, allegedly leaving him crawling in the street with nothing more than a soiled gown and a broken colostomy bag, police said.

Witnesses who said they saw the incident Thursday wrote down a phone number on the van and took down its license-plate number, which helped detectives connect the vehicle to Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center, the Los Angeles Times reported on its Web site.

Police said the incident was a case of "homeless dumping" and were questioning officials from the hospital.

"I can't think of anything colder than that," said Detective Russ Long. "There was no mission around, no services. It's the worst area of Skid Row."

The case comes three months after the L.A. city attorney's office filed its first indictment for homeless dumping against Kaiser Permanente for an incident earlier last year.

In that case, a 63-year-old patient from the hospital's Bellflower medical center was videotaped wandering the streets of Skid Row in a hospital gown and socks.

An after-hours call Thursday to Hollywood Presbyterian seeking comment was not immediately returned.

Kaylor Shemberger, the hospital's executive vice president, told the Times the incident was under investigation.

"Obviously we are very concerned about the information that has been presented to us," Shemberger said. "If some of the facts are correct, it is clearly not in line with our policy of handling these types of patients."

City officials have accused more than a dozen hospitals of dumping patients and criminals on Skid Row. Hospital officials have denied the allegations, but some said they had taken homeless patients to Skid Row service providers.

In 2005, Hollywood Presbyterian was accused of homeless dumping. At the time, a top executive denied the charge, but said Skid Row service providers offered treatment and care for some patients who had nowhere else to go.

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