



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Chad Enright Chief Deputy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Death Investigation Update

On Monday, February 19, 2024, at 6:20 a.m., a Columbus Police Officer was dispatched to Prairie Ridge Health 1515 Park Avenue in Columbus for a report of a man outside the entrance with a gun. As the officer arrived it was reported that the man had shot himself in the emergency room waiting area. Medical aid was immediately attempted by medical staff but not viable, as he had already passed away.

As a result of this incident, Columbus Police Officers requested that Dodge County Deputies respond to the individual's residence, in the Town of Elba, Dodge County, to check on the status of the individual's wife.

At 6:58 a.m., the Dodge County Sheriff's Office arrived at an address on Oak Grove Dr and located a female deceased in the home. The sheriff's office immediately began a joint law enforcement investigation into this incident and the case is still open and under investigation. As such we are only able to provide limited details into the investigation.

Our investigation to this point has led us to believe that David Zittel, age 85, shot his wife, Susan Zittel, both of the Town of Elba. He then went to Prairie Ridge Health, entered the lobby, and shot himself. No other individuals are believed to be involved in this incident.

With this incident occurring inside of a hospital, we feel it is important for the public to be aware that this is an isolated incident, and that the community is safe. We would like to community to also know that the Prairie Ridge Health responded as they should have and immediately went into lock down until mid-afternoon. They also diverted all ambulances temporarily until it was determined safe to resume operations. They resumed normal operation after the law enforcement investigation was completed on Monday.

The Columbus Police Department and the Dodge County Sheriff's Office have been in contact with the family, and they respectfully request privacy as they mourn the loss of their loved ones.

No other information will be available for release in this incident until the investigation has been completed.