

# THE WINDSOR STAR

## Cop probed in MD's beating

**Visually impaired doctor suffers head injuries in incident**

**Sarah Sacheli and Trevor Wilhelm, The Windsor Star**

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The province's police watchdog is investigating after a plainclothes Windsor cop allegedly beat a visually impaired doctor senseless in what appears to be a case of mistaken identity.

The Special Investigations Unit confirmed Tuesday it has launched a probe into the April 22 incident outside the Jackson Park Health Centre. The civilian agency, which investigates cases that may lead to criminal charges against police officers, is searching for witnesses to the incident.

Dr. Tyceer Abouhassan, an endocrinologist hoping to set up a practice in the city, was hospitalized and required emergency surgery to try to restore his already impaired vision. He suffered head injuries and a broken nose.



**An alleged altercation April 22 between a Windsor police officer and a doctor took place near the Jackson Park Health Centre. The province's Special Investigations Unit is investigating.**

Monica Hudon, spokeswoman for the SIU, refused to identify the police officer under investigation, saying he will not be named unless he is charged.

Hudon said the injured man's lawyer contacted the SIU on May 11.

Dr. Wassim Saad was at Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital when Abouhassan, one of his former medical students, was brought in. "I saw the aftermath of what had taken place," Saad said. "He had some amnesia."

Saad, an internal medicine specialist on call that night, said he was paged to the emergency department. "I wasn't the treating physician. I was just there more as a friend for support."

Saad said police officers arrived, but Abouhassan was never charged with any criminal offence.

Abouhassan had just arrived by train from London to have dinner with his fiancée and was cutting through Jackson Park as he jogged from the train station to his family home in South Windsor, Saad said.

Saad said he didn't witness Abouhassan's altercation with the police officer, nor could his friend tell him much about it that night because of his head injury.

In a short news release with few details Tuesday, the Special Investigations Unit said it was looking for witnesses to a man being arrested in the parking lot near the entrance door to the Jackson Park Health Centre about 5 p.m.

"There was an interaction between the man and the officer, and the man sustained injuries," the release reads. The police officer is described as wearing a yellow shirt. Abouhassan is not named nor identified as a doctor, and he is not described in any way.

"SIU investigators are probing the circumstances surrounding this case," the release reads.

The incident was captured on videotape by security cameras at the building. Hudon would not comment on whether investigators had viewed the tape or whether they had interviewed any witnesses.

Lawyer Anthony Barile, who represents Abouhassan, said in an interview soon after the incident that he was conducting his own investigation. Contacted Tuesday, he said he and the doctor prefer not to comment while the SIU investigates.

"We're letting the process take its course," Barile said.

Saad, interviewed before the SIU investigation was announced, said he is not surprised everyone is remaining tightlipped about the incident.

"It's obviously very sensitive. It's a delicate issue especially when you're dealing with law enforcement and an incident that happened like that."

After inquiries by The Windsor Star about the incident involving the doctor, Windsor police put out a news release April 27 about a man acting oddly at Jackson Park.

The release said the man was spotted there on April 22 and asked to watch the tennis players before approaching a 12-year-old girl and her mother and asking to get into their car. The release said a man with the same description has been "acting erratically" at the park in earlier incidents.

Workers at the Jackson Park Health Centre called the timing of the police news release suspect.

They said none of the staff had ever been notified about a suspicious man in the area, despite the news release saying there had been several occurrences.

"If there was something like that going on I hope I would have heard something," one worker said.

Windsor police Chief Gary Smith said Tuesday he cannot comment on the case because it is "an SIU matter."

Abouhassan was set to finish his endocrinology fellowship in June and was hoping to set up a practice here in July, Saad said.

He graduated from the University of Ottawa before going to medical school at the University of Western Ontario in London and rotated through Windsor on at least three occasions during his studies.

Saad said endocrinology is a good field for a visually impaired doctor because it's not a procedure-based specialty.

The SIU is asking anyone who witnessed the incident in the medical centre parking lot to call 1-800-787-8529, ext. 2314, or 416-622-2314.

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