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LOCAL

Mount Carmel says 5 patients may have survived with proper care

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At least five patients who died after receiving excessive doses of painkillers under a former Mount Carmel doctor's care might have lived if given proper treatment, health system officials confirmed for The Dispatch on Friday.

The five patients are among the nearly three dozen intensive-care patients who died after receiving the doses ordered by Dr. William Husel, system officials said. Reviews of medical histories, patient records and the care they received show that the five might have survived, according to Dr. Dan Roth, executive vice president and chief clinical officer for the Livonia, Michigan-based Trinity Health, Mount Carmel's parent.

The health system had previously indicated that all of the patients were near death. On Friday, Roth described them as all being "critically ill."

An ongoing internal investigation also has revealed that an additional patient received one of the doses, said Ed Lamb, Mount Carmel president and chief executive. That brings the number of patients to 35, with 29 of those doses potentially fatal.

"I hope that as we continue to go down this road that the community understands how devastated we are about all of this," Lamb said in an interview at Mount Carmel headquarters on the Far East Side. "And certainly we realize that we've lost the trust of our community, and we're working on trying to do everything we can to rebuild that."

>>Complete coverage: Find out more on this on-going investigation at Mount Carmel

Mount Carmel was notifying family members of the five patients Friday morning, Lamb said. Citing patient privacy laws, neither he nor Roth would publicly identify the patients or share details of their circumstances or care.