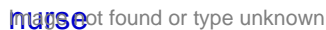# DNA test spurs arrest of nurse accused of impregnating vegetative patient

A 36-year-old nurse has been arrested on suspicion of impregnating a woman in a vegetative state who unexpectedly gave birth last month at a Phoenix health care facility, police said Wednesday.

Nathan Sutherland, a licensed practical nurse who was caring for the woman at the Hacienda HealthCare facility, has been arrested and is being booked on preliminary charges of sexual assault and vulnerable-adult abuse, Phoenix Police Chief Jeri Williams said.

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nurse Nathan Sutherland. Image credit: MCSO

A court order compelled Sutherland to provide a DNA sample to investigators on Tuesday, and crime lab technicians determined his DNA "matched the baby," Phoenix police Sgt. Tommy Thompson said.

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The arrest is the latest chapter in a weekslong investigation that started when the 29-year-old woman — who is not able to give consent and has been at the facility since 2002 — gave birth in late December to the surprise of her family and caregivers.

Sutherland has worked at the facility since 2011, and investigators are trying to determine whether he assaulted anyone else, or whether this woman was assaulted more than once, Thompson said.

Read full, original post: [A nurse is accused of impregnating a woman in a vegetative state who later gave birth](#)