

U. of C. hospital probes drug theft

By Philip Watley

A SPOKESMAN for University of Chicago hospitals said yesterday an investigation was under way to determine how an estimated 3 million prescription pills could have been taken from the hospitals' dispensary without detection.

The investigation was launched after police found an estimated 3 million pills Monday night in the apartment of one of the dispensary's night pharmacist, Raymond J. Bean, 39, at 647 W. Deming Pl.

The police obtained a search warrant and raided the apartment shortly after Bean was arrested near Dearborn and Division Streets for allegedly selling 100 disposable syringes containing a morphine compound to undercover policemen for \$1,000.

BEAN WAS RELEASED on \$1,500 bond for appearance Feb. 15 in Narcotics Court on charges of selling controlled substances, hypodermic needles and syringes. He also was suspended from his job.

Mitchell Ware, deputy police superintendent, estimated the pills confiscated would have street value of about \$1.5 million.

The spokesman for the 11 hospitals, John Milkereit, said the dispensary employs 62 people. He said Bean worked three nights from 5:30 p.m. to 7 a.m., and then was off duty six nights. He said Bean was the only pharmacist on duty there when he was working.

MILKEREIT SAID Bean had worked previously in the dispensary for 17 months and had quit his job in January, 1964; that he returned to the hospital in September, 1969, and had been there since. He said there have been shortages in the pharmacy in the past but that until Monday Bean had not been suspected.

Drugs are kept there in such large quantities, and there is such large turnover, Milkereit said, that it is difficult to keep track of them.

Audits are made periodically on an irregular basis, he explained. One started last Saturday disclosed that a number of morphine syringes were missing and this was reported to the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, he said. This audit is expected to be completed late this week.

The arrest was made by the police C-5 unit, which investigates police corruption and organized crime, and the police happened on to the Bean case in connection with another investigation, Ware said. Fifteen guns and a quantity of ammunition also were found in the apartment, he said.