

IN THE CORONERS COURT  
OF VICTORIA  
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2011 2623

**FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST**

*Form 37 Rule 60(1)*

*Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008*

**Inquest into the Death of: DONALD EDWARD PATERSON**

Hearing Dates: 10 October 2012

Police Coronial Support Unit Senior Constable King TAYLOR, Assisting the Coroner

Findings of: AUDREY JAMIESON, CORONER

Delivered On: 26 October 2012

Delivered At: Coroners Court of Victoria  
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street  
Melbourne 3000

I, AUDREY JAMIESON, Coroner having investigated the death of DONALD EDWARD PATERSON

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 10 October 2012

at MELBOURNE

find that the identity of the deceased was DONALD EDWARD PATERSON

born on 25 January 1949

and the death occurred on 18 July 2011

at St Augustine's Ward, St Vincent's Hospital, 41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy 3065

**from:**

1 (a) COMPLICATIONS OF END STAGE LIVER DISEASE

**in the following circumstances:**

1. Mr Donald Edward Paterson was 62 years of age at the time of his death. He had a medical history, which included Child Pugh Class C Liver cirrhosis secondary to Hepatitis C virus, diabetes and depression. He also had a history of heavy alcohol intake and violence towards others particularly his defacto partner and two of her three children. The onset of heavy drinking and violence is believed to have commenced in or around 1992, subsequent to Mr Paterson returning home after a prolonged period of hospitalisation for burns sustained to 40% of his body.
2. At the time of his death, Mr Paterson was serving a six year and 10 month sentence for crimes against the person including sexual offences. He was placed on the Sex Offenders List and eligible for parole on 6 December 2011.
3. On 23 March 2011, Mr Paterson was transferred from Port Phillip Prison (PPP) to the PPP's St John's Ward due to deteriorating health. On 3 July 2011, Mr Paterson was transferred to St Augustine's Ward at St Vincent's Hospital due to increasing ascites, right pleural effusion and hepatic encephalopathy.
4. On 5 July 2011, palliative care was instigation following consultation with Mr Paterson and his mother. A "Not for Resuscitation Order" was put in place.
5. Mr Paterson's condition continued to deteriorate. He died on 18 July 2011 at 03.15 am.

6. Mr Paterson's death was reportable because immediately before his death he was a *person placed in custody or care* as it is defined in the *Coroners Act 2008*.

### **Investigation**

7. Dr Heinrich Bouwer, Forensic Pathologist at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, performed an external examination of the body of Mr Paterson, reviewed a post mortem CT scan and the medical records and reported to the coroner that a reasonable cause of death could be attributed to complications of end stage liver disease.
8. The police investigation did not identify any suspicious circumstances.

**An Inquest** was held pursuant to section 52(2)(b) *Coroners Act 2008*.

9. Senior Constable King Taylor provided a Summary of the circumstances. No issues were identified. No witnesses were called to give evidence.

### **FINDING**

I accept and adopt the medical cause of death as identified by Dr Heinrich Bouwer and find that Donald Edward Paterson died from natural causes being the complications of end stage liver disease.

And I further find that there is no relationship between the cause of Mr Paterson's death and the fact that he was a *person held in custody or care*.

Pursuant to section 73(1) of the **Coroners Act 2008**, I order that the Finding be published on the internet.

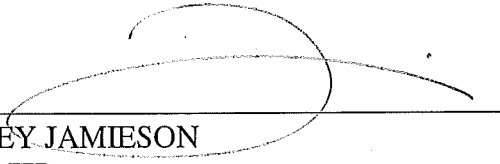
I direct that a copy of this finding be provided to the following:

Mrs Frances Paterson

Ms Katie Cunningham, Clinical Risk Manager, St Vincent's Hospital

Ms Penny Croser, Office of Correctional Services Review

Signature:



AUDREY JAMIESON  
CORONER  
Date: 26 October 2012

