



Department of Health

Secretary

11 AUG 2014



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Mr Lachlan Broadribb
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr Broadribb

I am writing in response to your letter dated 15 May 2014 relating to Coroner Jacqui Hawkins' recommendations to me in her finding on the death of Ms Georgia Cheal.

My response to the Coroner's recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation:

1. *I recommend that the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Health commit to a timeline for implementation of real-time prescription monitoring in Victoria, to reduce the harms and deaths associated with longstanding systemic health issues including poor coordination of care and inappropriate prescribing and dispensing. This timeline should include a goal that all Victorian prescribers and dispensers have access to real time prescription monitoring capacity within 12 months from the date I publish this finding.*

My response:

As raised in previous responses, the Department is very concerned to ensure that deaths and other harms related to pharmaceutical drug use are minimised. Accordingly, during 2013 the Department commissioned a business case to explore the options and present recommendations to the Minister for Health regarding the possible establishment of a real-time prescription monitoring system in Victoria.

The options outlined in the business case are currently being considered by the Minister. I appreciate that you share a keen interest in the introduction of real-time prescription monitoring in Victoria. However, the matters associated with implementation are complex and need to be thoroughly examined before any decision is made.

If you require further information please contact Mr Matthew McCrone, Chief Officer, Drugs and Poisons Regulation on 9096 5066 or email matthew.mccrone@health.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Pradeep Philip
Secretary