



RACGP

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2 May 2014

Ms Hannah Summerhayes
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 11 / 222 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Ms Summerhayes

Re: Court ref: 2005 000581 – Investigation into the death of Wayne Joannou

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) acknowledges receipt of the letter dated 2 January 2014 regarding the death of Wayne Joannou (Court ref: 2005 000581).

As per recommendation 1 and pursuant to Section 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2008, the RACGP will take the following action to emphasise the social dangers associated with changed mental state and diversion to stimulants which, in the absence of adequate follow up, can be associated with administering Naltrexone implants.

The RACGP will publish an article regarding this issue in the May 2014 edition of the Victorian Faculty Newsletter. This newsletter is published each month and is circulated to over 5000 Victorian Members of the RACGP. The RACGP will also disseminate this information to members of the RACGP National Faculty of Specific Interests - Addiction Medicine Network.

The information to be published will highlight that GPs should take caution when considering Naltrexone implants as a treatment option as this is not currently registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). In addition, we note that in 2011 the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) reviewed current literature for the effectiveness of naltrexone implants for the treatment of opioid dependence and concluded that evidence is currently at an early stage and as such, naltrexone implants remain an experimental product and should only be used within a research setting.ⁱ

The RACGP also encourages the Coroner to forward this recommendation to the Royal Australasian College of Physicians for dissemination, through the Chapter of Addiction Medicine, to addiction medicine physicians.

Should you have any further queries regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Ms Emma Stonham, State Manager – Victoria Faculty on emma.stonham@racgp.org.au or (03) 8699 0468.

Yours sincerely

Assoc Prof Morton Rawlin
Chair - RACGP Victoria Faculty

ⁱ <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/your-health/naltrexone-implants> = accessed 3 April 2014