



2 April 2019

Ms Audrey Jamieson  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh St  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006



DOC/19/44622

Dear Ms Jamieson

**Re: Finding into the Death of Mr John Richard Connelly, Court Reference COR 2016 4766**

We are writing in response to your recommendations made following your investigation into the death of John Richard Connelly, and detailed in your Coroners report on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

Ambulance Victoria (AV) has reviewed your recommendations and has undertaken the following corrective actions in response to the findings as detailed below:

1. *In the interests of public health and safety and with the aim of preventing like deaths, I **recommend** that Ambulance Victoria review the hypovolaemia guidelines CPG A0801 and CPG AAV-08 to make specific note of the risk of re-bleeding from previously controlled bleeding sites associated penetrating trauma when correcting hypovolaemia. AND;*
2. *In the interests of public health and safety and with the aim of preventing like deaths, I **recommend** that Ambulance Victoria review the hypovolaemia guidelines CPG A0801 and CPG AAV-08 to make specific note of the need to continuously assess the effectiveness of haemorrhage control following attempts to correct hypovolaemia.*

AV have updated the Hypovolaemia guidelines (CPG A0801), with the update released in October 2018. The guideline now includes specific notes including:

- a reminder that haemorrhage is an immediate life threatening problem
- a warning to prioritise the control of major haemorrhage over all other interventions

This guideline is also supported by the Principles of Major Trauma guideline which was also released in October 2018, which emphasises major haemorrhage as a life threat and also highlights the management of major haemorrhage as an immediate priority.

The review and development of these guidelines was done in consultation with the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) as the paediatric major trauma centre, and the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) and The Alfred Hospital as the adult major trauma centres in the Victoria. They have been approved by the AV Medical Advisory Committee.



These guidelines were implemented with face-to-face training for all paramedics through our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program. This training focused on the changes to the guidelines, together with refresher training on the indicators for, and application of, the Combat Application Tourniquet (introduced into AV practice in 2016) for life-threatening limb bleeds, and the 'Quikclot haemostatic dressings' (introduced into AV practice 2017) for penetrating torso bleeds.

Additionally, work is underway to update the Operational Work Instruction for the Combat Application Tourniquet (in addition to the guidelines) to ensure that the requirement for frequent re-assessment to ensure haemorrhage control is also clearly stipulated. This will be completed by 31/04/2019.

3. *In the interests of public health and safety and with the aim of preventing like deaths, I **recommend** that Ambulance Victoria and Trauma Victoria develop consistent practice guidelines pertaining to trauma patients across the prehospital and hospital setting*

Adult Retrieval Victoria (ARV), who are responsible for the operation of Trauma Victoria, have a representative on the AV Clinical Practice Guideline Committee and have been actively involved and contributing to the development and review of the trauma guidelines to ensure consistency state wide.

A complete audit of the consistency of all Clinical Practice Guidelines against those pertaining to Trauma Victoria (and Adult Retrieval Victoria) is underway. AV have elected to expand this work beyond the Trauma guidelines and are undertaking a review of all Ambulance Clinical Practice and Adult Retrieval Guidelines to ensure consistency in practice.

It is anticipated that the work identifying the variations will be completed within the next 6 months with the subsequent changes to be completed thereafter. The management of hypovolemia in trauma will be the first of the guidelines reviewed.

If you have any questions or concerns with regards to the details provided, please contact the office of the Chief Executive Officer on 9840 3540, and we would be pleased to assist further.

Yours sincerely



**Assoc Prof MICK STEPHENSON ASM**  
**Acting Chief Executive Officer**



**Prof STEPHEN BERNARD ASM**  
**Medical Director**

