



Department of Justice and Community Safety

Secretary

Level 26
121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Telephone: (03) 8684 0501
justice.vic.gov.au
DX: 210077

Our ref: 20031061
Your ref: COR 2014/5936

Coroner Paresa Spanos
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Coroner Spanos

I refer to your findings delivered on 14 January 2020 regarding the death of Mr Travis Fernandez at Dhurringile Prison on 23 November 2014. I apologise for the delay in responding and acknowledge that the department has not met the timeframe for a response.

Two of your recommendations were directed to the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), and one recommendation involved consultation with DJCS. DJCS supports all three recommendations, as detailed below:

Recommendation 1 - *That Justice Health collaborate with custodial health care providers to collect data on the reason(s) prisoners refuse medical treatment or refuse to attend specialist appointments to better inform further improvements to the custodial healthcare system.*

Recommendation 2 - *That Corrections Victoria collaborate with Justice Health and custodial health care providers to establish a common approach to what may constitute 'special circumstances' warranting transfer for secondary and tertiary healthcare other than via Port Phillip Prison, and ensure that primary healthcare providers (in particular) are aware that this facility exists and when it may be recommended.*

Recommendation 3 - *That St Vincent's Correctional Health consult with Justice Health and consider revising the policy of removing prisoner patients from the outpatient waiting lists after two consecutive appointment cancellations since, at present, information about why an appointment was cancelled or by whom does not appear to be meaningfully collated.*

Unfortunately, due to the unprecedented impact of COVID-19, particularly on Justice Health, further consultation and work is required to advise you about how and when DJCS will implement these recommendations. A fulsome response will be provided to the Coroners Court of Victoria by 30 October 2020.

Should you require any further information, please contact Allison Will, Director, Justice Assurance and Review Office at DJCS on 0437 458 158.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. Falkingham', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rebecca Falkingham
Secretary