

Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria

Email only: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Registrar

Re: Finding into the death of Harley R Larking (Finding)

On 18 September 2020, Coroner English made a Recommendation in her Finding directed to Northern Health, in the following terms:

“That the system for responding to identified environmental risks to patients in the psychiatric units, include prioritising of corrective or ameliorating actions and in circumstances where the risks are not managed in a timely way, require escalation to the governing body”.

To the extent that environmental risks identified in the psychiatric units at Northern Health campuses are within the power of Northern Health to address and seek to remedy, we support the substance of the Recommendation.

North Western Mental Health, part of Melbourne Health, operates all psychiatric units located at Northern Health campuses. Senior Executives of both organisations are members of a formal Liaison Committee which meets regularly to address issues relating to both the delivery of psychiatric services and the premises on which they are delivered.

I have written to the Committee advising its members that if any of them have (or receive) any concerns about environmental or premises risks facing patients in the psychiatric units operating on our campuses and consider that such risks are not being managed in a timely way, they are to escalate their concerns directly to me. That applies to all members of the Committee, whether employed by Northern Health or Melbourne Health. I will then ensure that appropriate action is taken to address the matters raised.

I have written to the Chief Executive of Melbourne Health, attaching a copy of this response and requesting that she contact me directly if she becomes aware of any concerns about the management of risks referred to in the Recommendation.

Yours sincerely



Siva Sivarajah
Chief Executive

Cc: Colin Woodward – Director, Engineering (Northern Health)
Richard Laufer – Chief Legal Officer (Northern Health)
Northern Health/North Western Mental Health Liaison Committee
Northern Health Executive OHS Committee

