



Cobram District Health

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*"Winner of the Premier's Award for Most Outstanding Rural Health Service 2006
& Highly Commended in 2007".*

10th June 2011

Ms Laura Steward
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 1, 436 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000



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shep.

epu.

Dear Ms Steward,

Coronial Recommendations – Mrs Veronica Campbell

I refer to your letter dated 15th March 2011 requesting a response to the recommendations made by the Coroner following the Inquest into the death of Mrs Veronica Campbell.

Recommendation:

Hospital facility descriptions, summarizing the facilities available at rural hospitals, should be created and utilized by Ambulance Victoria. These hospital descriptions need to be readily available to dispatchers.

Use of the term 'emergency department' should not be used for small rural hospitals with only urgent care facilities and a limited ability to respond to medical emergencies.

A letter was written to the Regional Director - Hume Region, Department of Health on 12 January 2011 regarding this recommendation. A response letter was received dated 1 February 2011 stating "the Department of Health is currently considering the recommendation and will in due course be providing a policy response that encompasses all rural health services, including CDH".

Notification has been received from the Department of Health endorsing the term change from 'emergency department' to 'urgent care' in rural health services. Cobram District Health is currently replacing all relevant signage across the organisation.

Recommendation:

Ambulance Victoria increases the number of ambulances available in the Shepparton region on evening and night shifts.

The implementation of this recommendation is outside of Cobram District Health's scope of action.

Recommendation:

Ambulance Victoria undertakes a complete systems review to determine the optimum ratio of dispatching staff to ambulance vehicles, on each shift.

Staffing must be at a level sufficient to enable staff to enter information on the Medical Dispatching System (or New Case Card system).

Staffing should be at a level that ensures dispatchers and call takers are able to take appropriate breaks.

The implementation of this recommendation is outside of Cobram District Health's scope of action.

Recommendation:

Clear lines of responsibility and decision making should be mapped out between Ambulance Victoria and hospitals with respect to the delivery of clinical information and requests for priority upgrades.

Where is disagreement, or the dispatcher is considering not providing an upgrade, there should be a structured decision making process. This process should include communicating the decision to the treating doctor.

The implementation of this recommendation is outside of Cobram District Health's scope of action.

Recommendation:

Information on the response time of Air Ambulance needs to be available to dispatchers before a decision to use Air Ambulance is made. This information should be obtained and considered before a decision to use Air Ambulances. This assessment should be mandatory when the transport of a patient is time critical.

Ambulance officers should consult the treating doctor if a decision may result in a delay in transport, so all issues can be considered.

The implementation of this recommendation is outside of Cobram District Health's scope of action.

Recommendation:

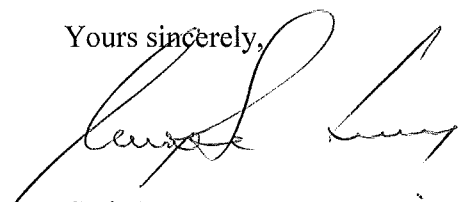
Ambulance Victoria and the Victorian Government develop a viable method of providing blood products in emergencies in rural communities.

Discussions have been held with the Red Cross with regards to Blood Storage at Cobram District Health. Currently, Cobram District Health transports blood products from Goulburn Valley Health via the Goulburn Valley Health Pathology courier, or by taxi in the case of an emergency.

Some of the issues highlighted by the Red Cross surrounding blood storage at Cobram District Health include:

- Short life span of blood
- Temperature risks when returning unused blood to Goulburn Valley Health that is close to expiry
- Supply restrictions (considering likelihood of blood being disposed of due to expiry)

Yours sincerely,



Craig De Lacy
Chief Executive Officer