



5 January 2012

Ms Selina Pasut  
Coroners Registrar - Mildura  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
Deakin Avenue  
**MILDURA VIC 3500**

Dear Ms Pasut

**RE: Coronal Inquest into the death of Rory [REDACTED]**  
**Court Ref: 2510 / 2005**

I refer to your letter dated 14 December 2011 enclosing recommendations made by the Coroner in relation to the above inquest. These recommendations include the following in relation to our organisation:

*'That the Australian Medical Association consider making it a mandatory requirement, that part of the continuing education taken by its members who prescribe addictive medication, is for training and education as to how to identify drug dependency and drug abuse and the strategies that can be implemented to limit it. In addition, such education could include alternative means of addressing the issues that give rise for the need for such medication in the first place.'*

I advise that AMA Victoria is **unable to implement** the above recommendation.

AMA Victoria is a voluntary membership organisation of medical practitioners. We do not provide or require our members to undergo continuing education and thus cannot make education on drug dependency a mandatory requirement for our membership.

Pursuant to the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law* (2009) (the National Law) the Medical Board of Australia (the Medical Board) is responsible for ensuring medical practitioners participate regularly in continuing professional development (CPD). The Medical Board requires practitioners to make a declaration that they have met the standard and have completed the necessary CPD when they apply for renewal of registration.

The CPD requirements for each practitioner depend on the type of registration they hold and the stage of their career. Medical practitioners who are on the specialist register are required to comply with the CPD requirements of their specialist college.

Therefore, in order for the effective implementation of the above recommendation, it should be made to the relevant colleges that are responsible for setting the CPD requirements for the practitioners who engage in prescription of addictive medication.

While many types of specialists are likely to prescribe addictive medication to patients, general practitioners are the group that is most likely to prescribe this medication on an

ongoing basis. We recommend that the Coroner address this recommendation to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. The relevant contact details are as follows:

Amber Mardon  
QI & CPD Program Officer  
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners  
1 Palmerston Crescent  
South Melbourne VIC 3205

While AMA Victoria cannot require our members to undergo drug dependency education, we can publish a summary of the inquest and findings in our monthly magazine *VicDoc*. *VicDoc* is sent to all AMA Victoria members and therefore has the capacity to reach all types of medical practitioners. This article can emphasise the need to obtain training as recommended by the Coroner.

Should the Coroner have any recommendations in relation to an article published by AMA Victoria, or if AMA Victoria can be of any further assistance, please contact me at the address listed above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Jane Stephens**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**AMA Victoria**