



## Secretary

Department of Health

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His Honour Judge John Cain  
State Coroner  
Coroners Court of Victoria

Via email to: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Judge Cain

### **REF: COR 2016 005581 – Investigation into the death of Adam Laufer**

Thank you for your letter of 29 July 2021 regarding your findings with inquest into the death of Adam Laufer.

I was saddened to learn of Adam's death at a young age. I extend my deepest condolences to his family and loved ones.

I note that you made two recommendations, one to the Department of Health and one to Mental Health Reform Victoria. As of 1 July 2021, Mental Health Reform Victoria was disestablished as an Administrative Office and folded into the Mental Health and Wellbeing Division of my department. Accordingly, I am pleased to provide a response to both recommendations.

#### **Recommendation to Mental Health Reform Victoria**

That recommendations 8, 9 and 10 arising from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System be prioritised and implemented in their entirety as recommended by the Royal Commission.

#### **Department response**

All recommendations made by the Royal Commission will be implemented in their entirety. The Victorian Government is taking a staged approach to implementation, recognising that a balance must be struck between the scale of reform and the urgency with which many recommendations need to be implemented.

In collaboration with sector agencies and other government departments, my department has already commenced detailed planning for implementation of the recommendations. As you might expect, this planning is guided by the Royal Commission's own recommended timelines. In that regard, the Royal Commission suggested that recommendations 8, 9 and 10 be implemented in the short to medium-term. We will ensure that these will be prioritised in the early waves. The Department will work collaboratively with other departments and agencies, including Victoria Police, to ensure a consistent whole-of-government approach is taken in responding to mental health crises.

### **Recommendation to the Department of Health**


That the current power provided pursuant to s351 *Mental Health Act*, however it is to be drafted into the new *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act*, and or the supporting documentation, provides clear and practical guidance on the role of the family, if any, in informing the use of police powers in circumstances requiring a community based crisis response.

### **Department response**

Work has already commenced to repeal the *Mental Health Act 2014 (Vic)* and replace it with a new *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act*. I expect that the new Act will be considered by Parliament by mid-2022. It will include objectives and principles to recognise and promote the important roles of families, carers, and supporters in the care, support and recovery of people living with mental illness or psychological distress. These will oblige decision-makers to respect and support the role of the family in applying provisions of the new Act.

Thank you for highlighting these opportunities for improvement to the care of individuals with mental health challenges.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Euan M Wallace AM**  
Secretary

03/10/2021