

1 February 2022

By email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

State Coroner John Cain
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTH BANK 3006

Dear State Coroner Cain

Delmont Private Hospital response to recommendations arising from Finding into the death of Paul Peterson

This document provides a response to your recommendations arising from the Finding into the death of Paul Peterson, delivered on 17 March 2020.

Recommendation 1: That Delmont Private conduct a comprehensive review of the operation of and compliance with the January 2020 Therapeutic Leave Policy and Therapeutic Leave Procedure. The review should be conducted by an independent person and be completed no later than September 2021.

Delmont Private Hospital engaged the services of an external independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the operation and compliance with Delmont's current leave policy which was further updated in March 2021. The September 2021 target to review compliance of the Therapeutic Leave Policy and Therapeutic Leave Procedures was unable to be met as patient leave was ceased due to COVID lockdowns. Once leave was recommenced in November 2021, the review was able to be undertaken in late November/early December 2021 to have an adequate number of patient files to review the leave process documentation.

The audit undertaken had two components:

- An audit of nursing staff understanding of the leave policy and procedures including documentation requirements, for both Accompanied and Unaccompanied leave. We interviewed 20 (28%) of the full time, part-time and casual nursing staff who are involved in assessing and documenting patients going on leave were interviewed one-on-one, and were able to articulate a high level of knowledge regarding the policy and associated documentation requirements.
- An audit of Therapeutic Leave documentation, reviewing both the Therapeutic Leave approval form completed by the treating doctor, plus the progress notes recorded by both medical and nursing staff including the risk assessment undertaken prior to and on return from leave. Of the 21 files reviewed for documentary compliance; 15 patients were taking Accompanied Leave and 6 patients were taking Unaccompanied Leave. The auditor recorded "All areas completed in correct time frame" for 17 of the 21 patients with the remaining 4 stating "Mostly completed", with minor gaps noted from clinical staff such as departure time recorded in the leave register but not in the progress notes.

Further education was provided to clinical staff regarding this, at staff meetings and one-on-one discussions. A review of the data in the audit also highlighted that an improvement could

be made to our leave approval form by adding a "tick box" to more clearly record that the patient's carer for accompanied leave had been provided with the Accompanied Therapeutic Leave information sheet, this has now been added to the form.

Recommendation 2: That Delmont Private Hospital consider developing an e-learning module or online training module for staff and consultants directed at obligations and compliance with the Therapeutic Leave Policy and Procedure.

The Hospital currently adopts an online training platform for staff delivered by an industry education provider for prescribed content. We have followed up with this provider and they are unable to provide a tailored solution as part of their general suite. In addition to these enquiries, to the pandemic environment requiring regular changes this was deemed not a viable option at this time, due to the logistical issues associated with the required changes.

Delmont Private Hospital remains committed to educating its staff and consultants, and ensuring they are made aware of its policies. The processes Delmont has progressed with, are regular updates to the key treating doctors via the monthly Medical Advisory Board meetings, at which approximately 20 doctors regularly attend and a briefing at the Delmont Medical Annual General Meeting which is also attended by additional credentialed doctors albeit that some of these doctors may not admit frequently.

Delmont has also sent the Therapeutic Leave Policy and Procedures, to its consultants electronically, and requesting that they review the policies carefully, and respond they have read and understood these using Adobe Sign, which is discussed at the next Medical Advisory Board Meeting with the key doctors to clarify any issues. This process is overseen by The Executive Office who will follow up any consultants who fail to return a signed copy of the documents.

Delmont's education coordinator who is a senior Registered Nurse regularly attends each ward handovers and meetings to discuss aspects of Delmont's Therapeutic Leave Procedure with clinical staff, and Delamont's Therapeutic leave policy is a regular session on the clinical staff education program.

Delmont reiterates that it is committed to supporting all staff and consultants to be fully conversant with the Therapeutic Leave policy and procedures.

Yours Sincerely



PETER SELAR
Chief Executive Officer