

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

TRIM: D23-39711

Coroner Paresa Antoniadis Spanos
Coroners Court of Victoria
[REDACTED]

Dear Coroner Spanos

Michael Stankic - Court Ref COR 2018 003392

Thank you for your letter of 31 July 2023 to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) in relation to the coronial investigation into the death of Mr Michael Stankic on 14 July 2018.

Your letter asks that the Commission consider inclusion of a definition of 'immobility' that is clear and easy for clinicians to apply in guidance related to the prevention of venous thromboembolism (VTE).

The Commission developed and released the [Venous Thromboembolism Prevention Clinical Care Standard](#) (the Standard) in 2018 and it was updated with minor revisions in January 2020. The goal of the Standard is to reduce avoidable death or disability caused by hospital-acquired VTE, through improved identification of patients who are at risk of VTE, assessment of VTE and bleeding risk, and appropriate use of VTE prevention methods.

In developing the Standard, the Commission reviewed multiple evidence sources, including the guidelines from the United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines. The NICE guidelines define 'significantly reduced mobility' as "*People who are bed bound, unable to walk unaided or likely to spend a substantial proportion of their day in bed or in a chair*". The Standard refers to this definition throughout the document. It further notes that 'significantly reduced mobility' should be assessed in relation to the person's usual level of mobility.

Quality Statement 1 of the Standard recommends the timely assessment of VTE risk using locally endorsed evidence based VTE risk assessment tools and cites a number of VTE risk assessment tools.

A review of the Standard is planned to commence in 2024, at which time the Commission will undertake a detailed review of current evidence including the following matters identified within the Coroner's report:

- Whether definitions of immobility requiring consideration of VTE prophylaxis within the Standard can be improved and generalised to other guidance provided by state and territory health departments. Risk assessment tools cited in the Standard will be reconsidered as part of the review, with regards to their clarity in terms of when to commence VTE prophylaxis
- Whether mechanical or chemical restraint should be listed as VTE risk factors.

I hope this information is of use to you. Should you wish to discuss this response, please contact my office via: [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your comments. The Commission values the work of the Coroners Court and appreciates the opportunity to consider how comments and recommendations may help us to improve the safety and quality of healthcare.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anne Duggan', written in black ink.

Conjoint Professor Anne Duggan
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

29 September 2023