



Secretary

Department of Health

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Kate Sanderson
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Via e-mail: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Sanderson

Thank you for providing the findings of State Coroner Judge Liberty Sanger dated 6 January 2026 into the death of Michelle Margaret Darragh. I offer my condolences to Ms Darragh's family and loved ones.

Judge Sanger made two recommendations, one of which is directed to the Department of Health (the department) as follows.

That the Department of Health works to amend the policy in all Victorian public hospitals such that when someone is assessed for suicidality after separation or end of a relationship, that a MARAM risk assessment is also completed, including contacting the partner or ex-partner, if willing.

The department accepts the recommendation and will implement it in a way that ensures that any contact with a partner or former partner occurs only where it is safe, appropriate and does not increase the risk of further family violence. The department will work with Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence (SHRFV) Program Leads and Specialist Family Violence Advisors to determine how best to implement this recommendation.

The SHRFV Program is a department-funded program that provides a system-wide approach to embed the practice of identifying and responding to family violence risks within Victorian public hospitals and health services. Victorian public hospitals use the SHRFV Program resources and tools to guide the implementation of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework. The department currently funds Specialist Family Violence Advisors who work within a variety of public settings including hospitals, mental health, and alcohol and other drug services to ensure that family violence expertise is embedded within these sectors.

Additional Relevant Information

The department is working with government and community partners to implement the *Victorian suicide prevention and response strategy 2024-2034*, which launched in September 2024 in response to recommendation 26 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The *First implementation plan 2024-2026* outlines a number of key initiatives related to the coroner's recommendation, including:

- Initiative 1.7: for the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) in partnership with the department and Victoria Police, to build an understanding of connections between family violence, sexual offending and suicide to identify key intervention points to support coordinated prevention and response efforts, including opportunities to strengthen referral pathways and service responses. The Victorian Government has commenced work on this initiative, which also corresponds with Action 95 in [*Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025-2027*](#).
- Initiative 5.12: for the department and the DFFH to build understanding of existing mechanisms/frameworks enabling collaboration and intervention to respond to suicide risk, including the MARAM Framework and the information sharing schemes. Family Safety Victoria is currently developing the child and young person-focused MARAM Practice Guides. These new resources provide guidance related to identifying and responding to suicide risk, including self-harm, for children and young people.
- Initiative 6.4: for the department and the DFFH, with input from the Coroners Court, to explore opportunities for linking additional family violence data sets to better identify contributing factors for suicide and points of intervention. The Victorian Government has commenced work on this initiative through adding data to the Victorian linked dataset, including aggregated, deidentified data on family violence risk assessments completed by organisations prescribed under the MARAM Framework. This adds to over 30 existing linked datasets, enabling comparisons to government-held data across the Victorian Government.

I trust this response is of assistance to the Court.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Atta PSM
Secretary

01/04/2026