



Secretary

Department of Health

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Marde Bevan
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria

Via e-mail: team5@courts.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Bevan

Thank you for providing the findings of Coroner Sarah Gebert dated 5 February 2026 into the death of Miss RST. I offer my condolences to Miss RST's family and loved ones.

Coroner Gebert directed one recommendation to the Department of Health (the department), being recommendation 3. It provides as follows:

The Victorian Government consider resourcing a trial of the use of youth peer workers in an Emergency Department environment to support young adolescents who present with suicidal ideation and serious behaviour dysregulation. The trial would need to take place in an Emergency Department that could provide an appropriate safe, quiet, comfortable place where a young adolescent can await medical attention and be assessed with appropriate levels of privacy. A well-designed evaluation of the trial, inclusive of the voices of the young people who use the service (and their families) and the youth peer workers should inform a potential expansion of the model across Victoria.

The department will consider the Coroner's recommendation to implement a youth peer worker trial as a part of its broader implementation of Recommendations 8, 9 and 10 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (Recommendations). The department is leading a multi-year, phased reform in partnership with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police and Triple Zero Victoria to progress these reforms. The Victorian Government has committed to implementing all the Royal Commission recommendations.

As part of this work, the department will assess resourcing options for a trial of youth peer workers in emergency departments, which will remain subject to future government decision making.

Additionally, I note that the department is already working with government and community partners to implement the [Victorian Suicide Prevention and Response Strategy 2024-2034](#), developed in response to Recommendation 26 of the Royal Commission. The strategy sets out a systems-based, evidence-informed, whole-of-government and community-wide approach to suicide prevention and response. It was developed in partnership with people with lived or living experience of suicide and was shaped by extensive consultation with clinicians, people who work with people disproportionately impacted by suicide and other sector experts.

The strategy is supported by an accountability framework and rolling implementation plans. The [First Implementation Plan 2024-2026](#) outlines initiatives 1.3 and 2.8, which relate to Coroner Gebert's recommendation.

Initiative 1.3 involves the department, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, trialing expanded out-of-hospital referral pathways and improved access to the Child and Youth Hospital and Outreach Post suicidal Engagement (HOPE) program operating from four sites, namely the Parkville Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Service (formerly Orygen), Monash Health, Alfred Health and the Royal Children's Hospital. The HOPE program provides up to 3 months of peer, psychosocial and clinical support after a suicide attempt or period of acute suicidal distress. The department has commenced the trial across all four Child and Youth HOPE sites, enabling referral without an emergency department presentation and improving timely developmentally appropriate access to support.

Initiative 2.8 focuses on the department's design of new safe spaces for young people, including drop-in and residential respite services, consistent with Recommendation 9 of the Royal Commission. The department has begun work on this initiative through a phased approach, with the first phase centering on the design of the future mental health crisis support system, including new and enhanced service models such as safe spaces for young people in crisis.

I trust this response is of assistance to the Court.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Atta PSM

Secretary

04/05/2026