



Secretary

Department of Health

50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Telephone: 1300 650 172
GPO Box 4057
Melbourne Victoria 3001
www.health.vic.gov.au
DX 210081

SBR-260600061

Amber Wylie
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria

Via e-mail: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Wylie

Thank you for providing the findings of Coroner Kate Despot dated 17 April 2026 (COR 2022 005509) into the death of Harrison William Ladd. I offer my condolences to Mr Ladd's family and loved ones.

Coroner Despot made the following recommendation to the Department of Health (the department):

That the Department of Health implement an education campaign to remind clinicians of their obligations to independently check SafeScript, above and beyond the alerts that may exist in their clinical software.

The department accepts the Coroner's recommendation and agrees to undertake educational activities to remind clinicians registered to access SafeScript of their obligations to independently check the system.

To implement this recommendation, the department will review and consider updating information published on the department's website with regards to pop-up notifications and the requirement to log into SafeScript portal to view patient's medicines records.

The department will also remind clinicians that they must take all reasonable steps to check the medicines records and information on SafeScript prior to prescribing or dispensing monitored medicines, and will reiterate that viewing a pop-up notification does not constitute a SafeScript check.

The department is in the process of finalising its approach to this educational reminder, but proposes sending an email to all SafeScript registered clinicians reiterating that:

- prescribers and pharmacists must take all reasonable steps to check the medicines record in the SafeScript portal before prescribing or supplying a registered medicine. This means clinicians must log into the SafeScript portal and view the medicines records in the patient's SafeScript profile;
- practitioners using software that is integrated with SafeScript will receive red, amber or green notifications when prescribing or supplying a monitored medicine;
- these alerts are designed to quickly signal to a clinician the level of risk that may be associated with a patient and prescribing or supplying a monitored medicine;

- the red, amber or green pop-up notifications in prescribing and dispensing software **must not be relied upon** when making clinical decisions in relation to a patient;
- the patient's SafeScript profile **must** be checked, and medicines records viewed, **on each occasion** prior to prescribing or dispensing a monitored medicine, unless a specific exemption applies;
- prescribers and pharmacists have a statutory obligation to check SafeScript, which means logging into SafeScript portal. It is an offence to fail to comply with this obligation; and
- provide a link to the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care Real Time Prescription Monitoring Fact Sheet for prescribers and pharmacists](#), which states prescribers and pharmacists should view the full patient record in real-time prescription monitoring (i.e. SafeScript) before prescribing or dispensing a monitored medicine.

The department has previously reminded clinicians of their obligations to check SafeScript beyond the alerts. In October 2023, the department sent a communication to all registered users of SafeScript advising that viewing a pop-up notification in prescribing and dispensing software does not constitute checking the medicines records and information in SafeScript (**Attachment A**).

For further context, it has now been several years since it became mandatory for clinicians to check SafeScript prior to writing or dispensing a prescription for monitored medicines, namely since April 2020. As you would be aware, pursuant to sections 30E and 30F of the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* (Vic), it is an offence for clinicians to fail to comply with these obligations. Notwithstanding this, the department notes that while SafeScript is a tool to support safer clinician decision making and reduce patient harm, it cannot prevent clinicians from prescribing or dispensing monitored medicines they believe are clinically necessary.

I trust this response is of assistance to the Court.

Yours sincerely



Katherine Whetton

A/Secretary

20/07/2026

Enc Attachment A: Email to practitioners regarding SafeScript – October 2023