

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

15 September 2016

Mr Josh Munro
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006
Email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Munro

Court ref: Investigation into the death of DELTA D POKE – COR 2011 004738

The Joint Consultative Committee on Anaesthesia has discussed the Coroner's recommendations made under the investigation into the death of DELTA D POKE and provides the following responses.

Coroner's recommendations

I make the following recommendations pursuant to section 72(2) of the *Coroners Act 2008* in connection with the death of Delta Poke:

1. *With the aim of reducing harms and preventing like deaths I recommend that the Joint Consultative Committee on Anaesthesia (JCCA), a tripartite committee with representatives from the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) (RACGP Rural) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), review the training required by general medical practitioners necessary for attaining accreditation from the JCCA to practice as a GP Anaesthetist.*

JCCA response

The JCCA supervises and examines GP registrars from the RACGP and ACRRM and other medical practitioners who are completing training via the Curriculum Statement in Anaesthesia (CSA) for Advanced Rural Skills Training post or Advanced Specialised Training Fourth Edition 2010 - <http://www.racgp.org.au/download/documents/JCC/2011anaesthesiacurricstatement.pdf> This training aims to broaden the skills and capacity beyond the standard scope of general practice training to meet the community needs of the diverse Australian geography and population distribution.

A review of the curriculum was commenced in mid 2015. Feedback was sought from stakeholders and a final draft submitted to the three Colleges for endorsement during 2016. The Colleges are currently discussing some required minor amendments. It is thought that the revision, to be titled 'JCCA Curriculum for General Practitioner Anaesthesia Fifth Edition 2016', will be able to be released by November 2016 and be in place for the 2017 training year.

2. *With the aim of reducing harms and preventing like deaths and promoting the professional standing and development of GP Anaesthetists by ensuring that they remain informed, appraised of and proficient in current practice and current practice standards in the area of anaesthesia, I recommend that the JCCA implement a compulsory continuing professional development (CPD) scheme for GP Anaesthetists.*

JCCA response

The JCCA commenced discussions in early 2016 on changing its Maintenance of Professional Standards (MOPS) Program - <http://www.racgp.org.au/download/Documents/JCC/JCCA-MOPS-program-handbook-2014-16.pdf> - to a mandatory CPD program for the 2014-17 CPD/PDP triennium. This was considered

important to provide a lead-in to the proposed introduction of a Diploma of General Practitioner Anaesthesia during 2019-20 which will require recertification through such a program.

The JCCA committee members are currently working on the requirements to be met by GP Anaesthetists during the triennium. These will be submitted to the three Colleges within the next two months.

GP Anaesthetists and all relevant stakeholders will be advised of the changes which will be introduced during 2014-17 prior to the end of 2016.

3. *With the aim of reducing harms and preventing like deaths and promoting the professional standing and development of GP Anaesthetists by ensuring that they remain informed, appraised of and proficient in current practice and current practice standards in the area of anaesthesia, I recommend that the JCCA link the provision of ongoing or triennium accreditation to practice as a GP Anaesthetist only on the completion of compulsory CPD points as determined within the stated period.*

JCCA response

As part of its current discussions between the three Colleges, the JCCA anticipates that with the introduction of a Diploma recertification will be linked to completion of the MOPS program. There will be an expiry date attached to the issue of the Diploma and advice to diplomates that participation in the MOPS program is mandatory.

However, it should be noted that the JCCA is an education and training committee only. It is not within its Terms of Reference to make any credentialing decisions on whether a GP can practise independently as a GP Anaesthetist in a rural area. This is a decision to be made by each individual hospital credentialing committee.

4. *With the aim of reducing harms and preventing like deaths and promoting the professional standing and development of GP Anaesthetists and assisting them to remain informed, appraised of and proficient in current practice and current practice standards in the area of anaesthesia through the provision of professional support, encouragement and access to consultant anaesthetists, I recommend that the JCCA investigate and examine the feasibility of introducing a formal but accessible mentoring program for GP Anaesthetists.*

JCCA response

As part of the expansion of the MOPS program to mandatory, the JCCA is discussing mentoring as one of the options to meet the requirements, to be introduced as noted under 2. for the 2017-17 CPD/PDP triennium.

However, it is recognised that mentors will need to be Fellows of the Australian and New College of Anaesthetists (FANZCA) and that the number of rural GP Anaesthetists who will wish to utilise this option is unknown. The JCCA's concern is that there may not be a sufficient workforce to meet the need. The mentoring option is to be trialled but will need to be monitored to assess how it can best be managed.

Yours sincerely



ASSOC PROF RICHARD WATTS
Chair
Joint Consultative Committee on Anaesthesia