



Ms Emma Lindsey  
Coroners Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street,  
Southbank VIC 3006

Dear Ms Lindsey

I am writing in response to your letter of 23 July 2015 (Court Reference COR 2011 004846) regarding Coroner Caitlin English's findings without inquest into the death of Mrs Hazel Bampton, which included a recommendation to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) under subsection 72(2) of the *Coroners Act 2008 (Victoria)*.

### Coroner's Recommendation

*The National Health and Medical Research Council should consider commissioning a working group, to collate and analyse evidence concerning thromboprophylaxis for outpatients who have a body mass index over 30. This would include those at increased risk of venous thrombo-embolism [VTE], such as people with trauma, requiring limb immobilisation. This evidence should be collated and analysed with a view to creating guidelines for hospitals and the health care system regarding their treatment and management of such patients.*

### Response to the Recommendation

#### Background

The NHMRC has a legislative responsibility both to develop guidelines and to approve guidelines developed by third parties which meet NHMRC's development standards. NHMRC is not funded to develop its own clinical practice guidelines, or to conduct the systematic literature reviews that underpin them, but instead develops them under contract for other agencies when commissioned to do so.

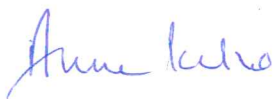
The NHMRC developed the *Clinical practice guideline for the prevention of venous thromboembolism in patients admitted to Australian hospitals* (the VTE guideline) in 2009. The guideline was developed to provide clinical advice on the management of patients admitted to Australian hospitals, and it specifically excluded the management of patients such as Mrs Bampton who are not admitted to hospital. The NHMRC considers clinical practice guidelines to be current only for a period of up to five years in order to ensure that guidelines reflect advances in relevant scientific evidence.

## Action

As the VTE guideline is no longer current I have written to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission), in its capacity as the agency leading the national review of the prioritisation of clinical practice guideline development in Australia, to request that any update of the VTE guideline include considerations for the care of outpatients at risk. Specifically, I have asked the Commission to consider broadening the guideline scope to include outpatients who are at increased risk and outpatients who have a body mass index over 30, as recommended by Coroner English.

I understand that the Commission, following a period of public consultation, will submit a final draft list of priority guidelines to the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council for its approval. Once approved, the list, and timetable for publication, will be published on the Commission's website at [www.safetyandquality.gov.au](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



Professor Anne Kelso AO  
Chief Executive Officer

13 October 2015