



Department of  
Education & Training

Office of the Secretary

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Ms Nicole D'Rozario  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroner's Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
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**By email: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)**

Dear Ms D'Rozario

**Investigation into the death of Baby D - COR 2012 001474**

I refer to your letter dated 12 April 2016 enclosing a copy of the inquest findings and recommendation made by His Honour Judge Gray in relation to this matter.

In the findings, His Honour Judge Gray made the following recommendation:

*"I recommend that relevant government departments (including the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Health and Human Services), in collaboration with the Municipal Association of Victoria and other stakeholders involved in delivering Maternal and Child Health services, examine the feasibility of the creation of a shared database, being in effect a single health record, of the monitoring and treatment of infants and children passing through the Maternal and Child Health system in Victoria. The purpose of the database would be to enable those monitoring and treating the infant/child to inform themselves, in real time, of progress and/or changes in the health or development of that infant/child by accessing the full medical record to that point in time."*

In response to this recommendation, the Department of Education and Training (Department) are working with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to explore policy and legislative enhancements to create opportunities for service providers to more accurately and reliably access, reference and share information about the welfare of a child consistent with the intent of the recommendation.

This work will build upon a number of existing Commonwealth and Victorian initiatives to improve information sharing between those service providers tasked with supporting and safeguarding the welfare of infants and young children.

The Departments' work will be undertaken in conjunction with whole of Government consideration of related recommendations made in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. These recommendations relate to how information sharing between Government agencies, specialist family violence services and others working to prevent family violence and provide support to victims, can be more readily facilitated.

The Victorian Government has committed to implementing each of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and is currently exploring the manner in which they will be implemented.

The Departments also anticipate that findings and recommendations from the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse may be relevant to the ability to share information in order to ensure the protection and welfare of children. The Commonwealth Royal Commission will provide its final report to the Australian Government by 15 December 2017.

*Relevant Commonwealth initiatives*

The Commonwealth Department of Health has, over the last two decades, spent considerable resources investigating the feasibility of a national electronic health record system and a large amount of work and research has been undertaken to deal with the range of operational, policy and legal complexities associated with developing a national electronic health record system.

On 1 July 2012, the National 'My Health Record' system was launched. The objective of the 'My Health Record' is to provide an individual and their healthcare providers with a secure online summary of the individual's health information including Maternal and Child Health records. The 'My Health Record' is dependent on the agreement of the individual (i.e. an opt in model).

Following many years of policy development and implementation this Commonwealth initiative achieves the objectives of His Honour's recommendation on a voluntary basis, with the consent of the individual.

*Relevant Department initiatives*

The Department has commenced a series of projects which will also foster and improve information sharing among a number of health professionals. These include the following:

- Revising the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Practice Guidelines to include additional guidance on information sharing.
- Working with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) to update the Collection Notice provided by MCH nurses to parents and families who engage with MCH services to provide further clarity around what information can be collected, used, and shared with other health and welfare providers.
- Continuing to work with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (and consult with the MAV) to strengthen information transition between maternity and newborn services and the MCH Service.

The Department has also supported the MAV to develop and implement a new Maternal and Child Health Service data system, known as the Child Development Information System. This system will also achieve much of the intent behind the current recommendation.

Please find enclosed a detailed submission prepared on behalf of both the Department and DHHS in response to the Coroner's recommendations.

If you would like further information, you may contact James Lawson, A/Director, Prevention and Health Promotion, Department of Education and Training, on 9651 3119 or by email: [lawson.james.mw@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:lawson.james.mw@edumail.vic.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**Gill Callister**  
Secretary

15/07/2016

Encl.