



Australian Government
Department of Health

SECRETARY

7 July 2016

Mr Josh Munro
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Mr Munro

Re: Finding into Death without Inquest of Frank E. Froid

Thank you for your letter of 6 April 2016 regarding the recommendation made by the Coroner under section 72(2) of the Coroner's Act 2008 (Vic) following the Finding into Death without Inquest of Frank Edward Froid (Court reference number COR 2012 004080).

In Recommendation 2 (p13) of her *findings*, Coroner Audrey Jamieson suggested that 'the Commonwealth Department of Health review the *National Guidelines for Medication Assisted Treatment of Opioid Dependence (MATOD 2014)* to ensure they provide adequate and explicit guidance to clinicians on how to manage maintenance pharmacotherapy in patients with asthma or other respiratory conditions.'

The Coroner, in her investigations, also notes that the current MATOD 2014 Guidelines state that 'mild asthma and emphysema are not contraindications to substitution treatment and changing the dose of substitute medication is generally not necessary, but it is appropriate to review other factors that might contribute to respiratory distress,' and suggest that concerned physicians should seek specialist advice or referral for these patients.

My Department undertakes to consider expert advice on more explicit guidance to physicians on higher levels of supervised dispensing to patients with chronic respiratory conditions when the Guidelines are next updated. The timing for the next update will be considered by the appropriate Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Committee.

For further information, please contact Ms Lisa McGlynn, Assistant Secretary, Drug Strategy Branch on (02) 6289 7186 or by email at Lisa.McGlynn@health.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Martin Bowles PSM