

3 August 2016

Ms Bree Dyson
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
Southbank
Victoria 3006

Dear Ms Dyson,

Re: Court ref: 2013 002123 – death of Kelly E Hall

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 22 April 2016 regarding the death of Kelly E Hall (Court ref: 2013 002123).

Pursuant to Section 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2008, the College responds to the recommendations as follows:

Recommendation

That the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners consider revision of their standards and guidelines to provide best practice guidance on coordination of care in general practice between general practitioners at different clinics.

The RACGP Standards for General Practices (the Standards) are a template for quality care and risk management in Australian general practice. The RACGP is developing the next edition of the Standards and Resource Guide (5th edition) which will be launched in October 2017.

The current draft of *Standard 6: Continuity of care* relates to the degree to which a patient experiences a series of discrete healthcare events as coherent, connected and consistent with their medical needs and personal circumstances. Continuity of care is distinguished from other attributes of care because of two key characteristics: it refers to care that takes place over time, and focuses on individual patients.

Criterion C6.2 – Clinical handover occurs whenever there is a crossover of care by different providers. The omission of, or inadequate, transfer of care is a major risk to patient safety and can result in serious adverse patient outcomes, due to the consequences that include:

- delayed treatment
- delayed follow-up of significant test results
- unnecessary repeats of tests
- medication errors.

The criterion provides examples of when a crossover of care by different providers occurs. The RACGP acknowledges that coordinated care by two general practitioners in different practices is not listed as an example.

The Coroners finding into the death of Kelly E Hall and subsequent recommendation will be referred to the RACGP Standards Unit for consideration during the final consultation phase of the Standards.

Should you or the Coroner wish to discuss this further, please contact RACGP Victoria on (03) 8699 0468.

Yours sincerely



Assoc Prof Morton Rawlin
RACGP Victoria – Faculty Chair