

IN THE CORONERS COURT  
OF VICTORIA  
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2011 2263

**FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST**

*Form 37 Rule 60(1)*

*Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008*

**Inquest into the Death of: ALISON MARGARET STAMP**

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|------------------------------|---|
| Delivered On:                | 15 June 2012                                      |
| Delivered At:                | Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street<br>Melbourne 3000 |
| Hearing Dates:               | 29 May 2012                                       |
| Findings of:                 | AUDREY JAMIESON, CORONER                          |
| Representation:              | Ms Sue Ellen on behalf of Eastern Health          |
| Police Coronial Support Unit | Leading Senior Constable Amanda Maybury           |

I, AUDREY JAMIESON, Coroner having investigated the death of ALISON STAMP

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 29 May 2012  
at MELBOURNE

find that the identity of the deceased was ALISON MARGARET STAMP

born on 14 September 1956

and the death occurred on 22 June 2011

at Wantirna Health, Mountain Highway, Wantirna South 3152

from:

- 1 (a) INFECTIVE EXACERBATION OF ASTHMA WITH CONGESTIVE CARDIAC FAILURE
2. DOWN SYNDROME

in the following circumstances:

1. Ms Alison Margaret Stamp was 54 years of age at the time of her death. She suffered from Down syndrome, dementia and asthma and had lived in residential care units all of her life. At the time of her death, Ms Stamp was residing at a Department of Human Services, Community Residential Unit located at 44 Crusoe Drive, Lysterfield. She was a high-care patient who was confined to a wheelchair and suffered chronic chest infections on a regular basis.
2. On 9 June 2011, Ms Stamp was admitted to the William Angliss Hospital and was diagnosed with pneumonia and infective exacerbation of asthma. During the course of her admission, a medical decision was made not to initiate cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the event of a cardiac arrest. On 17 June 2011, Ms Stamp was transferred to Wantirna Palliative Care. She was visited by her father, Mr Henry Stamp, on the same day who considered his daughter to be in her usual state.
3. On 19 June 2011, when Mr Stamp revisited his daughter, her condition had noticeably deteriorated. On 21 June 2011, after sudden clinical deterioration in her condition, she was examined by the palliative care physician. She was noted to be in respiratory failure. Palliative care continued.
4. On 22 June 2011 at 1025 hours Ms Stamp was declared deceased.

5. Ms Stamp's death was *reportable* as defined within section 4 of the *Coroners Act 2008* as immediately before her death, she was a person *placed in custody or care* as it defined within the Act.<sup>1</sup>

### Investigations

6. Dr Paul Bedford, Forensic Pathologist at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, performed an external examination on the body of Ms Stamp. He also reviewed a post mortem CT scan and reviewed Ms Stamp's clinical records before reporting to the coroner that a reasonable cause of death in the circumstances could be attributed to infective exacerbation of asthma with congestive cardiac failure. Contributing to death was her Down syndrome.
7. The police investigation did not identify any suspicious circumstances and no issues have arisen in relation to the care Ms Stamp received at her residential care unit or following her admission to hospital.
8. An inquest was held in accordance with Section 52(2)(b) as immediately before her death Ms Stamp was a *person placed in custody or care*.

### Finding

I accept and adopt the medical cause of death as identified by Dr Bedford and find that Alison Margaret Stamp died from infective exacerbation of asthma with congestive cardiac failure. Contributing to her death but not directly related to the cause was her underlying condition of Down syndrome.

AND I find no relationship between the cause of Ms Stamp's death and the fact that she was a *person placed in custody or care*.

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<sup>1</sup> Person placed in custody or care "person held in care" means—

(a) a person under the control, care or custody of the Secretary to the Department of Human Services; or the Secretary of the Department of Health

I direct that a copy of this finding be provided to the following:

Mr Arthur Stamp, Senior Next of Kin

Senior Constable Suzanne Brendel, Knox Police Station, Investigating Member

Dr Yvette Kozielski, Eastern Health

Signature:

  
AUDREY JAMIESON  
CORONER

Date: 15 June 2012

