

IN THE CORONERS COURT  
OF VICTORIA  
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2012 1415

**FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST**

*Form 37 Rule 60(1)*

*Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008*

**Inquest into the Death of: NEIL DOUGLAS EMONSON**

Delivered On: 15 October 2012

Delivered At: Coroner's Court of Victoria  
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street  
Melbourne 3000

Hearing Dates: 15 October 2012

Findings of: JOHN OLLE, CORONER

Police Coronial Support Unit: Leading Senior Constable Nadine Harrison

I, JOHN OLLE, Coroner having investigated the death of NEIL EMONSON

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on [date]

At MELBOURNE

find that the identity of the deceased was NEIL DOUGLAS EMONSON

born on 10 June 1954

and the death occurred on 22 April 2012

at Austin Health Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, 300 Waterdale Road, Heidelberg West, 3081

**from:**

- 1a. PNEUMONIA IN A MAN WITH EPILEPSY SECONDARY TO  
CHILDHOOD MENINGITIS

**in the following circumstances:**

1. Neil Emonson was aged 57 years at the time of his death. Neil suffered an intellectual disability and lived in Department of Human Services (DHS) care.
2. The file of Austin Health reveals that Neil was admitted on 16 March 2012 to 26 March 2012, in the Palliative Care Unit (PCU), for management of anorexia and constipation. He was discharged to his Community Residential Unit (CRU) for ongoing care. His guardian discussed Neil's management with the medical team and it was considered that the CRU was the best place for Neil and he was keen to return home.
3. The CRU staff were educated in respect to feeding instructions, together with his limited prognosis in view of his reduced capacity to swallow.
4. Following discharge Neil's OPA guardian met with Neil's General Practitioner who was working towards case conference with Community Palliative Care Team, in the hope of reducing hospital admissions and with the intention of keeping Neil at home for as long as possible.
5. On 12 April 2012, Neil was admitted to the PCU for the management of long-term seizures due to his childhood meningitis. Neil was placed in PCU because of anorexia and constipation. The issues related to his feeding, given his reduced swallowing capacity. Neil contracted aspiration pneumonia.

## Post Mortem Medical Examination

6. On 24 April 2012, Dr Sarah Parsons, Forensic Pathologist at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, examined the body of Neil Douglas Emonson.

Dr Parsons found the cause of death to be *pneumonia in a man with epilepsy secondary to childhood meningitis*.

7. I have today conducted a Summary Inquest in respect to the death of Neil Douglas Emonson.

## Finding

I find the cause of death of Neil Douglas Emonson to be *pneumonia in a man with epilepsy secondary to childhood meningitis*.

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

The family of Mr Neil Douglas Emonson;  
Austin Health Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital;  
Interested parties.

Signature:

JOHN OLDE  
CORONER  
Date: 15 October 2012

