



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

Mr James Whitton
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000



Dear Mr Whitton

Court Reference: COR 2009 000711.

I am writing to you as the Senior Nurse Advisor for the Department of Health and Ageing (the Department) in response to Recommendation 1 in Coroner White's inquest into the death of Ms Joan Ambrose at Noble Manor Aged Care Facility:

'That the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing continue to support residential aged care providers in meeting their emergency risk management obligations under the Accreditation Standards'

The Coroner's recommendation to the Department in connection with Ms Ambrose's death has been implemented.

The Department understands the importance of services being prepared for emergencies. Prior to each high-risk season the Department reminds residential aged care providers of their obligations under the Accreditation Standards and provides advice about emergency management planning. This year the high-risk season advice was distributed to providers on 11 October 2012. The Department will continue to provide this support and address issues of preparedness with the service providers.

The Department provides specific advice to aged care providers to assist them to provide appropriate care for older people during extreme heat events. The Department will amend this information to specifically describe the severe hazards associated with unsupervised departures during extreme heat events, and advise service providers to be vigilant of resident use of entry and exit points during these times.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Hunt'.

Dr Susan Hunt, RN, PhD, FRCNA
Senior Nurse Advisor
Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance
13 November 2012