



Department of Health

Incorporating: Health, Mental Health and Ageing

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23 November 2012

Ms Kate Doherty
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 11 222 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000



Dear Ms Doherty

Court Reference: COR 2010 001835 Shane A Jarrett

Thank you for providing me with a copy of the findings including the recommendation made into the death of Mr Shane A Jarrett.

In response to the recommendation made by the Coroner:

Recommendation

In the light of the above I recommend that the Minister of Health ensures that the prescribing of antipsychotic medications should attract adjunct processes for the prevention, detection, treatment and monitoring of the metabolic, cardiac or other disturbances associated with their use, with the aim of improving the morbidity and mortality of patients who require them for the treatment of serious mental illness.

Chief Psychiatrist's Response

The Chief Psychiatrist supports this recommendation. The risk of adverse side effects caused by psychotropic drugs is well recognised, especially the risk of weight gain which is often exacerbated by lifestyle issues commonly associated with severe mental illness. A number of services already have in place systems and processes to monitor weight and other metabolic factors. We will ensure that this recommendation is made known to all services, and examples of training aids and systems to monitor change will be distributed to services.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ruth Vine
Chief Psychiatrist