



## Secretary

Department of Health & Human Services



50 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000  
Telephone: 1300 650 172  
GPO Box 4057  
Melbourne Victoria 3001  
[www.dhhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au)  
DX 210081

e3913970

Dr Emma Lindsey  
Coroners Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Dr Lindsey

RE: Coroner's findings into the death of Mrs Hazel Bampton (without inquest)  
Court reference: COR 2011 4846

Thank you for your letter of 23 July 2015 enclosing the above finding.

The Department of Health & Human Services acknowledges the tragic death of Mrs Hazel Bampton, 67 years, who died as a result of a pulmonary thrombo-embolus, deep vein thrombosis and convalescent phase-left lower leg trauma following a low ladder fall in the home, whose injury was complicated by a high Body Mass Index of 35.88, type 2 diabetes, and hypercholesterolaemia.

I refer to the Coroner's recommendation, in this matter:

*"That the Victorian Health Department should consider a public education campaign to raise awareness of the potential risk of venous thrombo-embolism and the importance of early mobilisation for people who have a body mass index over 30 and find themselves immobilised after discharge from hospital or for any other reason."*

The department's response: The Coroner's recommendation is unable to be implemented.

The department acknowledges that deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism are recognised complications of lower limb injuries, especially among those requiring immobilization, and that early treatment of deep venous thrombosis may prevent potentially fatal pulmonary embolism.

Victorian health services follow the National Health and Medical Research Council guideline for integrating prevention of deep venous thrombosis and pulmonary embolism into routine hospital care. This is supported by an information brochure for at-risk patients entitled 'Stop the Clot: Reducing the risk of blood clots in your legs and lungs'. This campaign is to raise awareness on what patients can do to avoid clots and symptoms that should prompt them to seek urgent medical review while in hospital and after discharge and addresses the Coroner's above recommendation.

Given the importance of this issue, the department will also place an article on venous thrombo-embolism in the department's *RiskWatch* newsletter. This newsletter is circulated to health services and aims to improve patient safety by sharing awareness of factors that contribute to adverse events and recommendations made to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

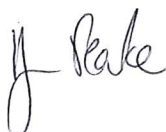
The department considers that given the existing campaign, '*Stop the Clot: Reducing the risk of blood clots in your legs and lungs*', and the low number of such cases, a further public education campaign would be cost prohibitive. Instead, the Victorian Government is investing in primary prevention through a number of health and wellbeing initiatives that target those who are overweight and obese, as well as older persons in Victoria.

With over 60 per cent of Victorian adults being overweight or obese, the Victorian Government is committed to the prevention of overweight and obesity. To this end, the Victorian Government has committed in 2015-16 to continue to support the creation of healthier places where Victorians live, learn, work and play through the delivery of the Healthy Together Achievement Program, the Healthy Eating Advisory Service and the *Life!* program which supports those at high risk of Type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. The *LiveLighter* obesity-prevention social marketing campaign, led by the Cancer Council Victoria, is also continuing with a new burst of advertising activity expected from mid-October.

In addition, the Victorian Government invests in Seniors Health Promotion activities, including the funding of healthy ageing projects, workforce development strategies, and the Victorian Active Ageing Partnership which promotes health and wellbeing for older people, including falls prevention.

If you require further information please contact Denise Laughlin, Acting Senior Public Health Advisor, Population Health and Prevention Strategy Branch, on telephone 9096 1048 or email [denise.laughlin@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:denise.laughlin@dhhs.vic.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



**Kym Peake**  
Acting Secretary

13/10/2015