



Secretary

Department of Health and Human Services

50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Telephone: 1300 650 172
GPO Box 4057
Melbourne Victoria 3001
www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
DX 210081

DHHS ref: e5125564

Court ref: COR 2018 000488

Dr Mikaela Meggetto
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006



Dear Dr Meggetto

**RE: Coroner's findings into the death of Mr Dennis Wright (without inquest),
Court Reference: COR 2018 000488.**

Thank you for your letter of 29 April 2019 enclosing the findings described above.

The Department of Health and Human Services (the department) acknowledges the tragic death of Mr Dennis Wright who died as a result of head injuries sustained in a ladder fall at home. I extend my sincere condolences to his wife, Mrs Mary Wright, and family.

I refer to the Coroner's recommendations:

1. *"With a view to promoting public health and safety and preventing like deaths, I recommend that DHHS continue its 'Ladder Safety Matters' campaign and give consideration to the implementation of additional education tools such as through social media or advertising."*
2. *"With a view to promoting public health and safety and preventing like deaths, I recommend that DHHS review the impact and effectiveness of the 'Ladder Safety Matters' campaign."*

The Coroner's recommendations will be implemented by the department.

The department is aware that domestic ladder falls continue to be a public health and safety issue. Deaths arising from ladder falls are continuing in Victoria despite the promotion of the *Ladder Safety Matters* campaign since September 2016. This highlights that falls among older people are complex and multifactorial in nature and require a strategic and multi-agency approach.

The department will continue promoting the *Ladder Safety Matters* campaign in 2019/20 and 2020/21 with an enhanced communication plan to include ladder falls and falls from heights, including roofs, in the do-it-yourself (DIY) domestic context, an expanded social media schedule and distribution of advertising material.

The national campaign was evaluated by the Queensland Office of Fair Trading in August 2017 which found the campaign to be relevant, memorable and motivating of safe ladder behaviour among older men. The Victorian campaign undergoes annual evaluation, which will again be conducted in May-June 2019 and results will inform the future of the campaign.

In addition to the *Ladder Safety Matters* campaign, the department advocates for falls prevention among older people through health promotion activities, including the *Victorian Active Ageing Partnership* and the *Active and Healthy Ageing Advisors*. Community awareness messages about the dangers of ladder falls are also promoted via the *Better Health Channel*, *Seniors Online* and Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, as well as by non-government organisations such as the Victorian Men's Sheds Association and the Council of the Ageing (COTA).

If you require further information please contact David Malone, Assistant Director, Population Health Unit, Prevention and Population Health Branch, on telephone 9096 5209 or email david.malone@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Kym Peake
Secretary

14/6 / 2019