



## 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](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au)  
DX 210081

e5148171

Ms Colleen Bebbington  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006



Dear Ms Bebbington

**RE: Corner Olle's findings into the death of Mr Darren A Templeton, Court (without inquest) reference: COR 2017 003850, recommendation 4**

Thank you for your letter of 23 May 2019 enclosing the findings referred to above.

The department acknowledges the tragic and unexpected death of Mr Templeton who died as a result of pulmonary thromboembolus and left deep vein thrombosis, following surgery.

I extend my sincere condolences to Mr Templeton's family.

I refer to the Coroner's recommendation, pursuant to section 72(2) of the *Coroners Act 2008 (Vic)* and with a view to improve public health and safety, that:

- 4. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services should consider a public education campaign to raise awareness of the potential risk of VTE [Venous thromboembolism] and the importance of early mobilisation for people, particularly in people who have a BMI over 30, are immobilised or recently discharged from hospital, as previously recommended by Coroner English.*

The department will implement an alternative to the Coroner's recommendation.

Coroner Olle's recommendation refers to an earlier recommendation by Coroner English in her findings into the death of Mrs Hazel Bampton (COR 2011 4846). I responded at that time that the recommendation could not be implemented, this was published on the Coroner's Court website at <[https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-06/20114846-response-dept-of-health-%26-human-services\\_bampton.pdf](https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-06/20114846-response-dept-of-health-%26-human-services_bampton.pdf)>.

The department's position on a public education campaign remains unchanged. However, my response to Coroner English's recommendation included references to a number of Victorian Government initiatives. These, and other, population health interventions will over time contribute to reducing the comorbidities across the Victorian population that are known

risk factors for the development of VTE. I have provided an update to these programs at **Attachment A**.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the commission) develops clinical care standards to support the delivery of appropriate, evidence-based clinical care and to provide shared decision making between patients, carers and clinicians. Coroner Olle noted the recent release of the commission's *Venous thromboembolism prevention clinical care standard* (October 2018), which states (in Coroner Olle's words) that "all adults presenting to hospital have an assessment of VTE risk... that is formally documented" (paragraph 55).

In light of this, and in addition to the programs outlined in **Attachment A**, the department has held discussions with Safer Care Victoria regarding targeted and effective communication with the sector regarding the clinical care standard. Safer Care Victoria has committed to work with health services, clinicians and consumers across Victoria to disseminate and assist in the implementation of the clinical care standard.

Safer Care Victoria was established to support all Victorian health services to deliver safe, high-quality care for patients, this includes providing information on best clinical practice. The agency supports a number of clinical networks that provide quality and safety leadership, champion change and drive improvement. The membership of networks includes health professionals, academics, health organisations and consumers.

Should 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](mailto:david.malone@dhhs.vic.gov.au).

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely



**Kym Peake**  
Secretary

9/8 / 2019

## POPULATION HEALTH INITIATIVES

### Government legislation and policy

- *Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2015-2019*  
<<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/public-health-wellbeing-plan>>  
The plan is mandated by the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, and is produced every four years (next plan is currently in development, to be released later this year).

The plan sets a vision for a Victoria free of the burden of disease and injury so that all Victorians can enjoy the highest standards of health, wellbeing and participation at every age.

The 2020-2024 plan will have as one of its key priorities 'healthier lifestyles for all Victorians.' Tobacco free living and healthier eating have been identified as the two highest level priority issues for the new plan. Obesity and smoking related health issues such as cardiovascular disease are known risk factors for VTE when combined with surgery.

### Community based interventions

The following programs provide support to groups of Victorians to improve their overall health and wellbeing. In particular they encourage healthy eating and physical activity, both interventions that may reduce obesity and other risk factors related to VTE.

- *Healthy Schools, Health Early Years and Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program*  
<<https://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/>>  
This program is a health promoting framework that supports Victorian early childhood services, schools and workplaces to create healthier environments for learning and working. It is based on the World Health Organisation's *Health promoting schools and workplaces* framework, tailored for the Victorian context. Currently over 1000 early childhood services, 570 schools and 920 workplaces participate.

The program is managed by the Cancer Council Victoria and targeted promotion to eligible services is undertaken as part of the program. The programs are freely available, and accessible via online portals, to all Victorian schools, early childhood services and workplaces.

- *Healthy Eating Advisory Service*  
<<https://heas.health.vic.gov.au/>>  
This service provides advice and support to early childhood services, schools, hospitals and sport and recreation centres to promote healthy choices in their menus and through catering, food outlets and vending. Nutrition Australia (Victorian Division) provides the Victorian Government funded service. Targeted promotion is undertaken to promote the service.

The service is available to Victorian early childhood services, outside school hours care, schools, workplaces, hospitals, sport and recreation centres, tertiary education and parks to provide healthier foods and drinks in their menus and through catering, food outlets and vending. The service can also provide support to the food industry, food outlets, caterers and suppliers.

- *Regional partnership programs for obesity-related prevention activity*  
Regional partnerships were established by the Victorian Government in 2016 in recognition that local communities are in the best position to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by their region. There are nine covering the state and two have implemented programs related to health and wellbeing:

Two programs are currently in the implementation phase:

- *Health Hearts*  
<<https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/news/healthy-hearts-for-loddon-campaspe>>  
A joint initiative of Loddon-Campaspe local government regional partnership. Received \$5 million in funding in 2018-19. An overview of the program can be found at the link above.
- *Prevention Lab*  
<https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/central-highlands/projects#the-prevention-lab>  
Central Highlands local government regional partnership is currently undertaking phase 2 implementation of the *Prevention Lab*. This initiative brings together stakeholders to design and then conduct prevention initiatives across the region.

### Support for individuals

- *Life! Program*  
<<https://www.lifeprogram.org.au/>>  
A lifestyle modification program offered free and currently helping approximately 5600 Victorians each year to make better decisions for their health and reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The program is funded by the Victorian Government and managed by Diabetes Victoria and has been operating since 2008.

The program is open to all Victorians who are at risk of developing type two diabetes (full criteria detailed on the web page). VTE and type 2 diabetes share risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, heart attack and stroke.

- *Better health channel*  
Victorian Government website, offering health information that is quality-assured, reliable and easy to understand.

Other investment:

Further recurrent investment of around \$70 million per year supports the delivery of a broad range of health promotion and prevention initiatives through VicHealth and community health services, many of which target health eating, physical activity and obesity.