



# Department of Health

Secretary

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1 AUG 2011



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Ms Marika Norton  
Coroners Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
Level 1, 436 Lonsdale St.  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Ms Norton

I refer to your letter dated 11 May 2011 (court ref:1552/07) detailing the findings and recommendations of the coronial inquest of Mrs Anderlina Laura Sanderson. Mrs Sanderson was living in a privately owned and operated residential aged care home and it was found that her death was accelerated by an assault perpetrated by another resident.

Of your recommendations, two specifically relate to standards and practices in relation to the management of people with dementia in residential aged care and a third relates to compulsory reporting requirements in residential aged care.

While I acknowledge your concerns and the challenges posed by such situations, the Commonwealth Government (rather than the State) is responsible for both the regulation and funding of residential aged care and also makes significant investments in a range of supports for people with dementia. I note that you have provided your report to the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Ageing, and trust that your concerns will be addressed.

Victoria has invested in some innovative programs to support people diagnosed with dementia, and also has a robust mental health system that supports residential aged care providers in the management of residents who exhibit behaviours of concern, including aged person's mental health (APMH) assessment and treatment services, intensive community treatment programs and APMH residential aged care facilities.

My department will provide some information regarding these resources and supports to the facility where Mrs Sanderson lived, to help inform their future approach to such issues.

Yours sincerely

**FRAN THORN**  
Secretary

4/7/2011