

31 May 2022

Ms Nancy Carbone
Coroner's Registrar
Coroner's Support Services
Coroner's Court of Victoria

Via email: team11@courts.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Carbone

Coroner's report – Investigation into the death of [REDACTED]

Thank you for providing the Coroner's Court of Victoria's investigation report into the death of [REDACTED]. I note that the Victorian Coroner, Darren Bracken, requested I receive a copy of his findings into [REDACTED] death.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of [REDACTED] and offer my condolences to her family and friends. The numbers of women losing their lives in the context of family violence must be a priority issue for all of us.

I note the Coroner's recommendation that *the Council of Australian Governments and Minister for Families and Social Services consider making counsellors and social workers subject to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme or a similar scheme so that their practices are regulated and underpinned by standards, guidelines and an educational framework facilitating family violence best practice, as it develops over time.*

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme is one that is founded on a national law that is adopted and applied by each state and territory. The Commonwealth does not have legislation to establish the National Scheme. Ministerial oversight is provided by a Ministerial Council comprising the state, territory and Commonwealth Health Ministers.

The decision to regulate health professions under the National Scheme rests with the Ministerial Council and ultimately State and Territory Parliaments. To introduce a new profession or occupation to the scheme amendments to the National Law need to be made after broad consultation and an assessment of regulatory impacts. We publish [the guidance on this process](#) on our website. Ahpra and the National Boards do not decide which professions should be regulated under the National Scheme. We are, however, able to advise Health Ministers on potential new policy for their consideration.

Following the dissolution of COAG and its standing committees by the previous federal government, Ministers currently meet on matters relating to the National Scheme as the [Health Ministers' Meeting](#). Ahpra has shared the published de-identified version of the findings (accessible on your website) with the Health Ministers' Meeting Secretariat and with the Victorian Department of Health to ensure they are aware of the findings and the Coroner's recommendation.

Please do not hesitate to Martin Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer of Ahpra, via email: Martin.Fletcher@ahpra.gov.au or on (03) 8708 9048 if you have any queries about my response.

Thank you for bringing this important issue to our attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gill Callister', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ms Gill Callister PSM
Chair Agency Management Committee