

8 July 2022

Coroner Paresa Antoniadis Spanos
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Coroner Spanos,

Investigation into the death of [REDACTED] - COR 2018 00250

We refer to Your Honour's Finding without inquest into the death of [REDACTED], dated 11 April 2022.

On page 11 of the Finding, Your Honour makes the following recommendation:

"That Peninsula Health improves the quality of the referral information between acute mental health services for same-day contact requested as a safeguard in the discharge planning of a person assessed by a mental health services in the Emergency Department by ensuring that:

- a) *Initial verbal referral for same-day contact includes a patient's contact details and a secondary or next of kin contact, subject to consent of the patient and secondary contact.*
- b) *Critical clinical and/or comprehensive assessment information in written form is communicated proximate to and as soon as practicable to the verbal referral to enable the receiving service to arrive at their own informed assessment of the acuity of the patient and to plan the appropriate clinical response".*

Despite our request, Peninsula Health was regrettably not afforded the opportunity to make submissions or respond to the proposed recommendation before the Finding was published. Had we been afforded this opportunity, we would have made submissions addressing the adverse comments and advised Your Honour that several operational changes had been implemented following [REDACTED] death, which directly address the recommendation. These include:

1. Peninsula Health Mental Health Service has reviewed and updated the Mental Health Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Clinical Practice Guideline. This guideline provides clear instructions to staff on discharge planning and clinical handover processes, including:
 - a) timeframes for the efficient transfer of information, including copies of relevant documentation between teams and to external providers;
 - b) details regarding the client's current address and phone number, nominated support person contact details (if client consent is provided), General Practitioners and/or other external providers should be re-confirmed prior to the discharge and documented in the medical records to enable correct details to be provided to ongoing care providers;

- c) the person responsible for the communication of the discharge information to ongoing care providers has been defined;
 - d) a clinical review process is completed on daily basis from the Consultant Psychiatrist and Program Manager/Senior Clinician of the Mental Health Consultation Liaison Service. This process reviews the mental health assessments, risk assessments and discharge plans of clients who have presented to the Emergency Department in the previous 24 hours. If any further additional interventions are required, this team will facilitate the appropriate intervention.
2. The Mental Health Assessment e-Form, which forms part of the client's medical record, has been updated to include additional demographic details (NOK, GP and other service provider details) and other relevant details such as Alcohol and Other Drug input/referrals, if applicable. This is in addition to the pre-existing fields for personal history, mental status examination and risk assessment. The assessment form has also been updated to include prompts for clinicians to ensure consistent and clinically appropriate documentation. Prior to this change, clinicians were required to send multiple documents to ensure all of this information was communicated to ongoing care providers.
 3. Peninsula Health Mental Health Service implemented a 'Phase of Care Program' in July 2021. This program requires all clients who present to the Emergency Department that require a mental health assessment to be registered onto the Client Management Interface ('CMI') system. This system is a State-wide system utilised by mental health services to facilitate the sharing of clinical information to assist with continuity of care.

Given the system and process changes that have already been implemented, we do not intend to implement further strategies in response to Your Honour's recommendation.

I trust this information satisfies your request for a response to the recommendation under sections 72(3) and 72(4) of the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic).

Yours sincerely



Helen Cooper
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE