

IN THE MATTER of the Coroner's Act 2008

and

the death of **TREVOR ANTHONY PETERSON – COR 2020 001509**

RESPONSE BY WESTERN HEALTH

THE RECOMMENDATION

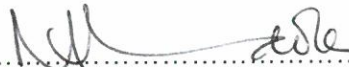
1. Pursuant to section 72(3) of the Coroner's Act 2008 (Vic), Western Health hereby responds to the following recommendation made by Coroner Simon McGregor on 6 May 2022:

“In light of the circumstances of Mr Peterson’s death already identified by Western Health reviews, and with the aim of promoting public health and safety and preventing like deaths, I recommend that Western Health identify and implement actions to improve communication with patients, their families, and their General Practitioners to ensure that preventative measures, particularly as part of post-procedure treatment, are understood and preventative options are maximised.”

STATEMENT OF ACTION IN RELATION TO RECOMMENDATION

2. Western Health accepts the Coroner's recommendation.
3. Western Health agrees that communication with patients and their General Practitioners upon discharge is an area that can be improved both in terms of timeliness and utility of the information provided.
4. Historically, discharge summaries were tailored towards General Practitioners and were not altogether patient friendly. In addition, due to the constant pressures on our clinicians, discharge summaries were not always provided to General Practitioners in a timely manner.

5. In an effort to improve communication and in doing so patient care, Western Health is currently piloting a program where discharge information is provided to patients at the time of discharge, along with timely completion of discharge summaries provided to General Practitioners. The intention is that discharge summaries will include information about the relevant admission/attendance, any follow up care provided and also specific information for health promotion, such as smoking cessation.
6. The program is currently in its infancy and has unfortunately been delayed due to COVID-19 and recent overall increased demand. In spite of this, the program has recently commenced on ward 1B at Sunshine Hospital. Parameters to determine the success of the program are currently being developed.
7. In addition, Western Health GP liaison unit recently conducted an internal evaluation with the General Internal Medicine unit and identified a number of systematic barriers to timely completion of discharge summaries. A key learning from this evaluation was that all medical staff agree that discharge summaries and post-discharge follow up are very important for patient care, however require adequate staffing and supervision to be consistently and sustainably completed. This finding is being actively taken into consideration in our Junior Medical Staff recruitment and rostering for 2023.



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Dr Nicki Murdock
Chief Medical Officer
Western Health