

5 August 2022

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Coroner Bracken
Coroners Support Service
Via email cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Re: Dane Warren Simpson, Court Reference: COR 2019 003390

Dear Coroner Bracken,

The Australian Psychological Society (APS) thanks the coroner for the opportunity to respond to the recommendations resulting from the hearing into the death of Mr Dane Simpson.

The APS wishes to acknowledge that the inquest found no evidence that the psychologist's treatment of Mr Simpson was below the expected standard.

The APS has implemented the coroner's recommendation as follows:

- The APS has updated our current obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) Practice Guide to include the recommendation that psychologists should recognise the usefulness of gathering collateral information from families and involving family members in treatment, in particular where obsessive thinking and compulsive behaviour may carry the risk of self-harm. This Practice guide has also been linked within our OCD worksheets.
- The Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Practice Guide is currently undergoing a more extensive review. The renewed Guide is due in late 2022 and will also reflect the current recommendations. Members will be alerted when this renewed Guide is available.

It is important to note that due to the guidelines of ethical practice psychologists cannot disclose information to a third party, including family members, without the consent of the client unless they are concerned the client may be at risk of harming themselves or others. In these instances, the psychologist is to inform the client of their concerns, the rationale for disclosing information, and document this clearly. Psychologists inform clients of the limits to confidentiality at the outset of treatment. Within this process the psychologist can seek emergency contact details for their client, explain why this information is required, and how this information may be used.

Outside of the situations described, psychologists are obligated to respect their clients' wishes, but should encourage and support them to make informed decisions about the inclusion of family members in their care.

Yours sincerely



Dr Zena Burgess FAPS FAICD
Chief Executive Officer