



Colleen Bebbington
Senior Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Support Services
Coroners Court of Victoria

cpuresponses@courts.vic.gov.au

Dear Colleen

Re: Investigation into the death of Brendan Crippen

Thank you for your correspondence received 28 June 2022, concerning Coroner Olle's recommendation to the Chief Psychiatrist in relation to the death of Brendon Crippen. Apologies for the delay in responding to this recommendation.

The Coroner has recommended for the Chief Psychiatrist of Victoria to:

- a) Work with the Chief Civil Psychiatrist of Tasmania to review the need for a cross-border agreement relevant to the Mental Health Acts of both states; and
- b) Raise awareness of the expectation of contemporary clinical practice in arranging for follow up and/or transfer of care with mental health services of a client known to be in the other state.

In response to the above, the Chief Psychiatrist states the following:

- a) *Work with the Chief Civil Psychiatrist of Tasmania to review the need for a cross-border agreement relevant to the Mental Health Acts of both states; and*

Currently, all states and territories across Australia have their own separate mental health legislation which allows for a person to receive involuntary mental health treatment. These orders are referred to as civil mental health orders. When a person subject to such an order moves to another state or territory, their order is not automatically accepted or 'mutually recognised' by the new jurisdiction's mental health service system. This can result in unnecessary barriers and inconsistencies which make moving between jurisdictions more difficult for people.

Whilst there is no current interjurisdictional agreement between Tasmania and Victoria, we note there is a project in development which will aim to address this issue nationally.

The project, known as The National Mutual Recognition Project, aims to develop a national scheme which will ensure if a person with an order made in one state or territory moves, their order will be recognised by the new state or territory. This will allow the person to continue to receive mental health treatment under their existing order.

- b) *Raise awareness of the expectation of contemporary clinical practice in arranging for follow up and/or transfer of care with mental health services of a client known to be in the other state.*

The current Chief Psychiatrist guideline on discharge planning explains it is vital and an expectation for services to have relevant discussions and clear communication between clinician, consumer, family/carer and the service/person who is to provide ongoing treatment.

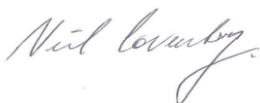
All Chief Psychiatrist guidelines are currently undergoing review, to ensure they are aligned with the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Services Recommendations and the new *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022* (Vic).

The discharge planning guideline has been prioritised in this process and will be enhanced to include transitions of care, not just discharge from inpatient units. This will include principles for effective communication and information sharing between relevant services.

In addition to the project and guidelines, the Chief Psychiatrist's office will continue to monitor and encourage best practice approaches for all consumers receiving mental health treatment and consider future opportunities to work with my counterparts on better communication between states.

If you have any queries, please contact the Chief Psychiatrist's Office on 1300 767 299.

Yours sincerely



Dr Neil Coventry
Chief Psychiatrist of Victoria
Health and Wellbeing Division

07 /09 / 2022