

30 September 2022

Coroner Audrey Jamieson
Coroner's Court

Dear Coroner Jamieson

Re: Melissa Gaultier COR 2017 1792

I am responding on behalf of the Latrobe Regional Hospital Mental Health Service (LRH MHS) in relation to the one recommendation you made regarding Melissa Gaultier's death.

- 1. With the aim of promoting public health and safety and preventing like deaths, I recommend that Latrobe Regional Health implement a patient continuity of care transfer admission policy for its inpatient mental health ward, which aims to rectify the circumstances associated with Melissa Gaultier's transfer admission from Monash Health, by ensuring that appropriately qualified clinician(s)/inpatient consulting psychiatrist receiving handover details from another hospital are rostered and available to continue with that patient's care on admission.***

LRH has adopted the coroner's recommendation with updates made to policy and process, which includes updates to the **Mental Health - Admission to and Discharge from Inpatient Units (Flynn and Macalister) Protocol – providing the addition of a patient continuity of care transfer process** providing direction for Psychiatrists regarding consumers transfers back to the area from external Hospitals.

The Policy offers clear advice for all local area patients being transferred back from an external hospital to be admitted to an acute mental health unit, having clear and well-documented communication in the LRH electronic medical record (EMR) between the transferring psychiatrist and receiving psychiatrist.

The policy ensures that the receiving psychiatrist shall maintain ongoing clinical responsibility for the person's clinical management for the duration of their admission, where possible. It is expected that transfer will proceed during business hours Monday to Friday, 8:30-17:00hours and will be well coordinated with the multidisciplinary teams to ensure continuity of care.

Where an urgent transfer is required to occur outside of business hours, being the weekend where a community mental health consultant may be rostered, then the allocated inpatient consultant will receive a clinical handover and provide ISBAR handover when they are back on duty to discuss treatment and consumer goals.

The treating psychiatrist allocated to manage the consumer during their stay will work with the consumer and the Multidisciplinary team (MDT) to support consumers in developing and identifying recovery goals and preferences, building on the recovery-


oriented and strengths-focused approach, and in keeping the consumer's mental and physical wellbeing.

The allocated consultant psychiatrist and MDT will continue to work with consumers, carers and supporters to support consumers in their recovery and transition into community care from inpatient services.

All consultant psychiatrists have been briefed on the changes and educated about the current policy requirements for consumer transfers into the mental health bed-based service, as well as their roles and responsibilities for transfer from internal-to-internal LRH mental health beds.

Please contact me should you require further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sebastiano Romano". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping tail.

Sebastiano Romano
Executive Director Mental Health
Senior Psychiatric Nurse