



**The Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care**

Ref No: MC22-020821

Ms Nicole D'Rozario
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms D'Rozario

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 November 2022 regarding the Coroner's investigation into the death of Mr Sotirios Temopoulos. I would like to pass on my sincere condolences to Mr Temopoulos' family. I write in response to the following recommendation:

I recommend that the Federal Health Minister conducts a feasibility study for the introduction of a national incident and near miss reporting mechanism for medication errors.

In consideration of your request, I have sought guidance from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (Commission), as the body that leads and coordinates national improvements in the safety and quality of health care.

In 2019, the Commission conducted a scoping exercise into the plausibility of implementing a National Incident Reporting System for Primary Health Care. The scoping exercise identified a high level of fragmentation in this sector due to healthcare professionals providing care independently from each other. In addition, it was found that national or jurisdictional-level incident reporting systems were challenging to develop and implement and were yet to gain significant traction in primary health care.

The challenges relating to a national incident reporting system in primary health care does not preclude individual healthcare services, such as community pharmacies, from implementing their own incident management system to support a culture of safety and quality through learning and continuous improvement.

Key elements of clinical governance, such as incident management, are addressed in the Commission's National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards (Primary and Community Healthcare Standards),¹ which were launched in October 2021. These Standards aim to protect the public from harm and improve the quality of health care delivered and can be applied in any primary or community healthcare service.

¹ www.safetvandquality.gov.au/standards/primary-and-community-healthcare

Some primary healthcare services are already accredited to profession-specific standards. Over 90% of community pharmacies for example are accredited to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (Guild)'s Quality Care Pharmacy Program.² The Commission is working with the Guild to align the Pharmacy Program to the Primary and Community Healthcare Standards.

Over time, this will support a nationally consistent approach to safety and quality improvements across the sector and ensure the inclusion of incident monitoring systems in community pharmacies nationally.

Should you require any further assistance regarding this matter, please contact:

Chris Leahy
Acting Chief Executive Officer
(02) 9126 3576 or Christopher.Leahy@safetyandquality.gov.au

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Mark Butler

21/11/2022

²www.qcpp.com/about-qcpp/what-is-qcpp