



PRIME MINISTER
The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Reference: MC22-074739

Ms Kate Sanderson
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court Of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Court Reference number: COR 2018 003266

Dear Coroner's Registrar Sanderson

I refer to Coroner Judge Cain's findings and recommendations delivered on 10 October 2022 concerning the death of Ms Fatima Batool at 19 Redwood Avenue, Hampton Park, Victoria on 7 July 2018:

- *With the aim of promoting public health, preventing deaths and supporting medical practitioners to address family violence, I recommend that the National Federation Reform Council (NFRC) review the current registration standards required of medical practitioners with a view to updating CPD requirements for General Practitioners. A specific portion of CPD training undertaken by General Practitioners should be dedicated to family violence to reach an occupation-specific level of family violence understanding and referrals for further support where a patient is identified as experiencing or suspected to be experiencing family violence.*
- *I recommend that similar measures be taken to introduce family violence mandatory CPD for registered psychologists and psychiatrists to provide for an occupation-specific level of family violence understanding and referrals for further support where a patient/client is identified as experiencing or suspected to be experiencing family violence.*

My Government will consider these recommendations. I am committed to addressing the social, cultural, political and economic factors which underpin gendered violence. Enabling General Practitioners (GPs), psychologists and psychiatrists to better identify and intervene in cases of family, domestic and sexual violence is a supported reform to this end.

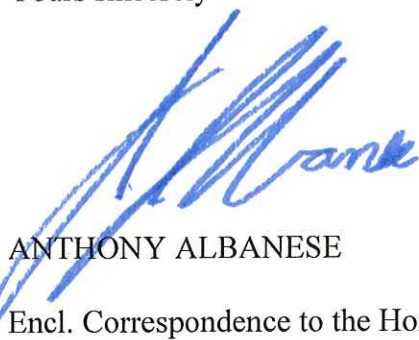
In response to your recommendations I have asked the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, to work with the Health Ministerial Council (HMC) in developing options to enhance family, domestic and sexual violence training in the health workforce. These options are to include your recommendation of mandatory family violence CPD components for GPs, psychiatrists and psychologists.

Note that Governments share responsibility for CPD with the relevant medical and allied health colleges who deliver it, and reform will need to be collaborative.

I also note that you directed your recommendations to me in my capacity as Chair of the NFRC, which has been replaced with Ministerial-level Councils. The HMC is the most suitable body to consider this work in the context of the revised federal relations architecture.

I thank the Court for its work investigating the death of Ms Batool and providing these recommendations to me in hopes that the tragic circumstances which led to her death may not be repeated in future. I trust that this advice addresses your recommendations.

Yours sincerely



ANTHONY ALBANESE

Encl. Correspondence to the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care



PRIME MINISTER
The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Reference: MC22-074739

The Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Mark,

I am writing to you in response to a letter I received on 10 October 2022 from the Coroners Court of Victoria (the Court). This letter enclosed a copy of Coroner Judge Cain's Finding without inquest into the death of Ms Fatima Batool that made two recommendations to promote public health and support health practitioners prevent family violence. The same recommendation was also made by the Court on 1 December 2022 as part of Judge Cain's Findings into the death of Ms Alicia Little from family violence:

- *I recommend that the National Federation Reform Council (NFRC) review the current registration standards required of medical practitioners with a view to updating CPD requirements for General Practitioners. A specific portion of CPD training undertaken by General Practitioners should be dedicated to family violence to reach an occupation-specific level of family violence understanding and referrals for further support where a patient is identified as experiencing or suspected to be experiencing family violence.*
- *I recommend that similar measures be taken to introduce family violence mandatory CPD for registered psychologists and psychiatrists to provide for an occupation-specific level of family violence understanding and referrals for further support where a patient/client is identified as experiencing or suspected to be experiencing family violence.*

To appropriately respond to these recommendations, I ask that you work with the Health Ministerial Council to develop options for consideration to enhance family, domestic and sexual violence training in the healthcare workforce with a focus on General Practitioners (GPs), psychologists and psychiatrists, promoting improved responses to gender-based violence by healthcare workers. I ask that these options:

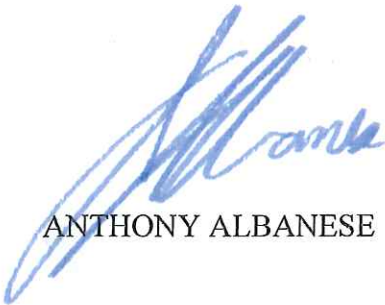
- be developed in consultation with Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Women, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services, and the new Women's Safety Ministerial Council, which is in the process of being established and will have Ministers Gallagher and Rishworth as its co-chairs
- demonstrate alignment with the objectives of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032
- be informed by the evaluation of the 'Improving Health System Responses to Family and Domestic Violence Primary Health Network' pilot (the Pilot)
- consider the inclusion of mandatory family, domestic and sexual violence training in the medical degrees and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) modules of GPs, Psychiatrists and Psychologists.

I note the relevant colleges are ultimately responsible for managing CPD course content, and the Government must work with them to develop and adopt new educational material on family and domestic violence.

I welcome the Court's recommendations as they align with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 calling for training and workforce development across sectors like healthcare and frontline workers. This call is consistent with key recommendations made in Victoria's 2016 Royal Commission into Family Violence. I am also pleased these recommendations similarly align with the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement's goal to improve the mental health workforce's understanding of family, domestic and sexual violence.

I have copied in the Hon Yvette D'Ath MP, Queensland Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Chair of the Health Ministerial Council, Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services.

Yours sincerely



ANTHONY ALBANESE