

Our Ref: RL:AP:220027

Your Ref: 2018 004883

3 February 2023

Nick Boesten  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
Southbank VIC 3006

*By email*

Dear Mr Boesten

## **Investigation into the death of Mr Warren Frazer**

I refer to your letter dated 20 October 2022 and the Findings of Coroner Bracken.

Northern Health responds to each of the Recommendations made in the findings pursuant to s72(3) of the *Coroners Act 2008 (Vic)* as follows.

### **Recommendation 1**

Northern Health has devised and implemented an innovative approach to resolve this issue with technology. The IPatient Tracker software was developed and implemented across Northern Health general operating theatres, day procedure units and Broadmeadows surgical centre.

The IPatient Tracker provides relatives of our consumers with a platform to track their loved one's progress "in real time" throughout the surgical and recovery journey. The software obtains the consumer's location from Northern Health's computer system to capture their in-theatre details.

On admission, the consumer's relatives are given a copy of the consumer's UR number. The system is colour coded for each stage of the journey (colours that have been chosen to sit outside of the colour blindness assessment charts), and as the consumer moves through the peri operative areas, the UR number changes colour to reflect the current stage. In the event of a delay, the surgeon will contact the consumer's relatives to provide an update, provided that it is safe and reasonable to do so and does not impact upon the surgeon's ability to attend to the immediate needs of the consumer.

In addition, Northern Health's Division of Medicine and Cancer services is currently exploring software to track a consumer's entire care journey through all the various treatment pathways. It is envisaged that the software will be able to provide "real time" information on all stages of the consumer's care and can be used to identify matters requiring attention. It is anticipated that these matters will be addressed by newly created cancer coordinator roles. To that end, as at July 2021, Northern Health has already created two new cancer coordinator roles to support cancer consumer's through the designated optimal care pathway.

## **Recommendation 2**

Northern Health agrees with this Recommendation and confirms that efforts are underway to facilitate an agreement between Northern Health and St Vincent's Hospital.

## **Recommendation 3**

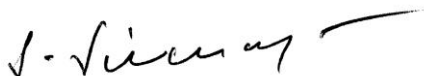
Northern Health has conducted audits with respect to lung cancer meetings in accordance with the requirements of medical decision making, imaging and time to surgery as well as VHIMS outcomes.

## **Recommendation 4**

Northern Health agrees with this Recommendation and confirms that:

- a) the effectiveness of the role has been measured by the establishment of the unit meetings and satisfactory performance reports for the Head of Unit and through regular morbidity & mortality audits.
- b) the Head of Unit has successfully completed his supervision period and is admitted as a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons.
- c) The thoracic surgery unit:
  - i. Conducts 3 monthly quality meetings of the lung cancer tumour stream and presents their results to the wider forum.
  - ii. maintains an audit of all procedures done by the unit and has recently joined The Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand Thoracic Clinical Quality Registry ('ANZTHOR') which is a national database supported by the Australian & New Zealand Society of Cardiac & Thoracic Surgeons ('ANZCTS').
  - iii. has a combined consultant weekly ward round to discuss issues affecting the unit.

Yours faithfully



Siva Sivarajah  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Northern Health**