

Ref: OUT23/780



31 May 2023

Marde Bevan  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroner's Support Services  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
62 Kavanagh Street  
Southbank VIC 3006

Via email to: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Registrar Bevan

**Investigation into the death of Mr W – Court ref: COR 2019 001711**

I refer to your correspondence of 27 March 2023, enclosing a copy of Coroner Gebert's Finding without inquest into the death of Mr W.

I note the recommendation made under section 72(2) of the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic) (the Act), which is directed to the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board):

- a. *That the Psychology Board of Australia in the development of a national code of conduct for Ahpra registered psychologists consider:*
- *the role partners and family have in a person's care, especially when a client is at greater risk and,*
  - *that a client may wish to involve their partner and family at any stage of a therapy and,*
  - *that psychologists actively and regularly discuss with a client the appropriate and safe involvement of partner's and family.*

On behalf of the Board, I provide this written response to the recommendation, in accordance with the requirements under sections 72(3) and 72(4) of the Act.

I confirm that the Board's review of its code of conduct that applies to all registered psychologists in Australia is in progress and includes development of a Board-authored regulatory code. The Board is in its final stages of preparing for public consultation on its proposal. I advise that the Coroner's recommendation to consider the above factors in the development of our code of conduct has been implemented.

As part of the Board's review, an expert advisory group (the group) was formed to provide ongoing profession-specific and technical advice on development of the code of conduct. The group comprises of individuals with regulatory, legal and ethics expertise.

After receiving the Coroner's finding in March 2023, experts from the group considered the recommendation, specifically the role of partners and family in the provision of psychological services to clients.

Psychology Board of Australia  
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency  
GPO Box 9958 Melbourne VIC 3001 [Psychologyboard.gov.au](http://Psychologyboard.gov.au) 1300 419 495  
[psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au)

Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

As the draft code of conduct is yet to be finalised, the Board is unable to provide further details about the content of its proposal at this stage. When the consultation period commences, the Board will be in a position to include Coroner Gebert as a stakeholder for distribution of the public consultation materials and extend our invitation for feedback. The consultation materials will be made available to the public through the [Board's website](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Phillips".

**Rachel Phillips**

Chair, Psychology Board of Australia