



13 September, 2023

Coroner Jamieson  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3004

Dear Coroner Jamieson

**Finding into the death of Catherine Ann Williamson  
COR 2017 4582**

Healthscope acknowledges and accepts the Coroner's Finding and recommendations.

Healthscope responds as follows to the Coroner's recommendations.

*1. With the aim of preventing like deaths and promoting public health and safety within its mental health in-patient units I recommend that Healthscope Operations Pty Ltd seek legal advice around the feasibility of implementing "pat-down" searches, including when "pat-down" searches would be appropriate, such as when a patient returns from leave. Such advice should include:*

- *The legal basis on which pat-down searches are conducted*
- *The implications of completing pat-down searches for staff (role changes, training, protection from litigation etc)*
- *And with regards to the impacts outlined above.*

We confirm that Healthscope is in the process of obtaining legal advice in this regard. We also note that the Coroner had made the same recommendation to the Chief Psychiatrist. Healthscope will liaise with the Chief Psychiatrist's office in this regard.

*2. And I further recommend that Healthscope Operations Pty Ltd review relevant guidelines in light of the outcomes of the advice provided, as outlined above.*

Healthscope will review its guidelines upon receipt of legal advice in response to recommendation 1 and/or the direction of the Chief Psychiatrist in relation to this issue.

*3. With the aim of preventing like deaths and promoting public health and safety within its mental health in-patient units and ensuring that their nursing staff are immediately notified of changes to policies and procedures that go to nursing*

*competencies and standards, I recommend that Healthscope Operations Pty Ltd address the "operational" delay(s) in disseminating such changes as was identified in the investigation into the death of Catherine Ann Williamson.*

We confirm Healthscope has changed its processes and systems to ensure that nursing staff are notified of changes to policies and procedures relevant to nursing competencies and standards in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely



Associate Professor Victoria Atkinson (She / Her)  
Chief Medical Officer  
Cardiothoracic Surgeon