



Secretary

Department of Health

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COR 2023 002206

Ms Kate Bryant
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Via e-mail: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Bryant

Thank you for providing Coroner McGregor's findings in relation to the death of K M who died after consuming 3,4-methylenedioxy-nmethylamphetamine (MDMA) and methylone. My sincere condolences go to K M's family, friends and community.

I note Coroner McGregor's finding that K M's death was likely caused by the unintended consequence of consuming MDMA and methylone. And that while the potency and composition of the substances ingested was unable to be verified, serious risks are associated with consuming substances obtained from unregulated drug markets.

From this investigation and its findings, Coroner McGregor has recommended the Department of Health (the department) trial a drug checking service in the State of Victoria to explore the potential to minimise the risks and number of preventable deaths associated with the use of drugs obtained from unregulated drug markets. The department accepts this recommendation.

The Coroners Court is likely aware of the Victorian Government's recent announcement of a drug checking implementation trial. This is in response to recommendations made by coroners over recent years, and an increase in the number and potency of novel psychoactive substances and the associated harms and fatal poisonings.

The Victorian Government is implementing an 18-month mobile and fixed site drug checking trial. Planning for implementation is underway, with the aim of mobile drug checking services being available by December 2024 for the Victorian summer festival season. The fixed site is earmarked to commence in 2025 at a Melbourne location close to nightlife precincts and transport services.

The Victorian drug checking service will test illicit drugs for dangerous substances, with healthcare and peer workers present to provide tailored information to help people make better, safer and more informed decisions.

The drug checking service will also generate important data to feed into the department's drug monitoring capability. This capability produces timely, actionable intelligence about AOD-related public health and community safety issues providing early warning of changes in drug market trends and conditions, improving service responsiveness and preventing the emergence of crises.

The department is committed to providing evidence-based services to support Victorians make better, safer and more informed choices.

I thank Coroner McGregor for the investigation and presentation of findings to address drug related harms in Victoria. I would also like to again express my condolences to K M's family, friends and community who have been affected by this tragic loss of life.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Whetton

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Acting Secretary

11/07/2024