



12 December 2024

Ms Kate Sanderson  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroners Support Services  
Email: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Ms Sanderson

**Re: Investigation into the death of George Diamond - COR 2019 000968**

We acknowledge receipt of Coroner Judge Cain's findings, including the recommendations made under section 72(2) of the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic) (**the Act**), resulting from the inquest into the death of George Diamond.

We appreciate the opportunity to review these findings and to consider how the Neurosurgical Society of Australasia (**NSA**) can contribute to enhancing care and safety standards. Ensuring that patients receive appropriate assessment and treatment, especially in sports such as boxing or mixed martial arts where head injuries are prevalent, is a critical public health issue. The potential long-term effects of repetitive head impacts remain an area of significant concern and ongoing research.

Our response to the recommendations is as follows.

**Recommendation 2:**

**The Neurosurgical Society of Australasia, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), in conjunction with Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP) should consider developing appropriate mandatory training for medical practitioners in relation to providing medical clearance for individuals to commence and return to boxing and other combat sports.**

We respect that it is primarily the role of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (**RACGP**) to develop curriculum and training for general practitioners. While this is the RACGP's responsibility, the NSA is committed to supporting discussions or collaborative efforts to enhance training and promote safe practices in combat sports. We would be pleased to collaborate and provide expert opinions to assist the RACGP and the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP) in reviewing existing training or developing new training modules as they deem appropriate to address the coroner's recommendations.

**Recommendation 3:**

**The Neurosurgical Society of Australasia, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM), consider developing guidelines to be followed in respect of patients presenting with mild head injuries but resulting from potentially dangerous mechanisms and which fall outside the scope of the Canadian CT Head Injury/ Trauma Rule (CT Head Rule) and also include the appropriate threshold for undertaking a CT Scan or MRI of a person's brain where injury has occurred in a boxing or mixed martial arts context.**

The NSA endorses the Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport (**Consensus Statement**), a globally recognised framework that provides standardised guidelines for the assessment, management, and prevention of sport-related concussions.

Developed by international experts through the Concussion in Sport Group, the most recent statement (Amsterdam 2022) reflects evolving evidence and best practices in concussion care.



# NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA

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The Consensus Statement supports a systematic approach to managing concussions, emphasising safety, individualised recovery, and evidence-based care. It includes return-to-sport strategies and guidance for those experiencing persistent symptoms, utilising a multimodal clinical assessment.

The Consensus Statement generally does not recommend routine imaging studies (such as CT or MRI scans) for diagnosing concussion, as concussions typically involve functional rather than structural brain injuries, which are not visible on standard imaging. However, imaging studies may be recommended in specific cases where "red flags" or severe symptoms indicate a more serious underlying brain injury.

We would be pleased to collaborate and provide expert opinions to support the RACGP and ACEM should they find that general practitioners and emergency physicians would benefit from additional guidelines in this area. We believe that a collaborative approach will help ensure that patients presenting with these types of injuries receive the most appropriate and effective care.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family of George Diamond. The NSA remains committed to supporting efforts that improve patient care and safety, and we hope that our contributions to these recommendations will help prevent similar tragedies in the future.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us at [administration@nsa.org.au](mailto:administration@nsa.org.au) or on 03 9600 1276.

Yours sincerely

Kate Drummond  
**President**