

Inquest into the death of Timothy John

Timothy John was 22 years of age when he died on 17 April 2013. He died from hanging one week after commencing Champix (Varenicline), a prescription medication used to treat nicotine addiction. The coroner investigated the adequacy of the care provided by Mr John's general practitioner and whether Champix contributed to Mr John's death.

Coroner John Hutton delivered his findings of inquest on 14 September 2017.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported.

Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible agency named in the response.

Recommendation 3

All state and territory forensic pathology services follow Victoria's lead and conduct routine toxicology screening for Varenicline in relation to suicides and suspected suicides. This will create a national data set, which will still only provide a 'signal', but may assist in terms of a closer examination of the extent that Varenicline can be linked to suicide in the future.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Health.

On 9 April 2018 the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

Following a 12 month trial, routine screening of Varenicline commenced in Queensland Health forensic pathology laboratories in all coronial matters in which toxicology is performed. The Office of the State Coroner informed other states and territories in regard to this recommendation.