

Inquest into the death of Robert Dennis McIntosh

On 25 May 2013, Robert McIntosh was transferred to the Princess Alexandra Hospital from the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre. He experienced abdominal distension and nausea for the previous week. On admission to the hospital, he was noted to have clinical features of chronic liver disease. By the afternoon of 28 May 2013 his prognosis was assessed as very poor and he died on 29 May 2013.

State Coroner Terry Ryan delivered his findings on inquest on 12 June 2015.

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.

The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

Recommendation 1a

I recommend the Queensland Government convene a working party comprised of representatives from Queensland Health, Queensland Corrective Services, the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service, the Metro South Hospital and Health Service, Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and other correctional facilities to examine how the identification and management of patients with hepatitis and cirrhosis in correctional settings could be improved.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Health (lead) supported by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

On 21 January 2016 the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

The Department of Health is considering the coroner's recommendation and will provide more information in early 2016.

On 10 May 2016, the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services responded:

A working party met with representatives from Queensland Health, Queensland Corrective Service, West Moreton Hospital and Health Service (HHS), Metro South HHS and Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre. The working party examined how the identification and management of patients with hepatitis and cirrhosis in correctional centres could be improved.

A final report is being prepared for Queensland Government, which will provide advice on options for the future management of hepatitis C in correctional settings.

On 12 September 2016 the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services responded:

The working party has examined and identified improvements in the management of patients with hepatitis and cirrhosis in correctional centres. In particular, the *Australian recommendations for the management of hepatitis C virus infection: a consensus statement 2016* (the statement) was released

in February 2016. The statement provides new models of the treatment for hepatitis C, including for prisoners. New direct-acting antiviral medicines have been listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. This enables the medication to be prescribed by doctors specialising in treating hepatitis C. The new medications are highly effective and well tolerated.

Local improvements include the approval to deploy fibro scanning* into the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service Prison Health Services; appropriate education and training for medical and nursing staff in the use of the scanner and the development and roll out of clinical pathways to assist staff in the identification and management of chronic liver disease including hepatitis C. Consumer education materials are also being developed.

*A fibro scanner is a technique used to assess liver stiffness, it shows the condition of the liver and allows health professionals to diagnose and assess the damage caused by conditions such as cirrhosis.

Recommendation 1b

I recommend the Queensland Government convene a working party comprised of representatives from Queensland Health, Queensland Corrective Services, the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service, the Metro South Hospital and Health Service, Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and other correctional facilities to review the former 'Protocol for the management of viral hepatitis in offender health services' in consultation with appropriate experts, for distribution to all hospital and health services.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Health (lead) supported by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

On 21 January 2016 the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

The Department of Health is considering the coroner's recommendation and will provide more information in early 2016.

On 10 May 2016, the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services responded:

The working party developed a procedure based on the former protocol for management of viral hepatitis in offender health services. The new procedure describes the steps for supporting the diagnosis and clinical management of prisoners with hepatitis B, hepatitis C and/or HIV in prison health services across Queensland Health. The procedure is finalised and is available for adoption by other Hospital and Health Services.