Inquest into the death of Nicole Sonia Nyholt and Margaret Louisa Clark

On 9 June 2015, the 60 year old driver of a Toyota Landcruiser experienced an epileptic seizure and lost control of his vehicle. The vehicle veered off the main road in the township of Ravenshoe and travelled almost 170 metres across parkland before colliding with a 180kg LPG gas cylinder, triggering an explosion in the Serves You Right Café. The explosion resulted in injuries that caused the deaths of Margaret Clark and Nicole Nyholt.

Coroner Nerida Wilson delivered her findings of inquest on 26 June 2020.

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 to the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

**Recommendation 1**
The inter-working group collaborate to develop an ongoing education and awareness campaign directed to all medical practitioners in the State of Queensland, including hospital based doctors (including rural and remote hospitals) and general practitioners (including rural and remote general practitioners), and that such campaign be specifically developed to educate medical practitioners about the pathways that already exist, for medical practitioners to report patients directly to the state driver licencing authority in circumstances that are consistent with the medical standards provided for in the Austroad assessing fitness to drive guidelines.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Transport and Main Roads (lead), supported by the Department of Health.

On 23 September 2020 the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is working with Queensland Health in relation to the implementation of this recommendation. Department of Transport and Main Roads commenced initial planning on the formation of the inter-agency working group.

Department of Transport and Main Roads will confirm the administration of the proposed inter-agency working group. This includes, but is not limited to, the terms of reference and inviting nominations from the proposed associations. Department of Transport and Main Roads will continue internal consultation regarding the development of the proposed campaign.

On 8 July 2021 the Minister for Transport and Roads and the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services responded:

The Department of Transport and Main Roads wrote to the relevant peak bodies and agencies and requested their nominations for representatives for the working group. Terms of reference for the working were developed. The Department of Transport and Main Roads also began internal consultation to inform the development of the proposed campaign.
The first meeting of the working group was held on 30 April 2021. The Department of Transport and Main Roads will continue internal consultation to inform the education and awareness campaign.

**Recommendation 2**
A working group of relevant stakeholders review the current standards and guidelines in respect of continuity of care, discharge, and handovers relevant as between doctors and patients, and doctors and doctors, and hospitals and general practitioners.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Health.

On 2 October 2020 the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

Queensland Health is currently considering the recommendation.

**On 8 July 2021 the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services responded:**

In June 2017, Queensland Health provided General Practitioners (GPs) access to the Health Provider Portal, enabling secure online access to patient healthcare information from Queensland’s public hospitals. This includes current patient alerts, discharge summaries, clinical notes, investigations and results, outpatient referrals and appointments. Over 4300 Queensland GPs have registered to access the Health Provider Portal and this is currently being expanded to other eligible health practitioners, including specialists, nurses, midwives and paramedics.

The Queensland Health General Practice Liaison Network discussed opportunities to improve medical condition and discharge reporting with the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The network will investigate the possibility of including a mandatory field in the enterprise discharge summary to capture whether, during a patient’s admission to hospital, any concerns have arisen regarding their ability to drive. The enterprise discharge summary assists clinicians to generate, manage and distribute discharge summaries in a timely and secure manner.

In late 2020, Queensland Health conducted a survey of GPs regarding discharge summaries and transfer of care communication. The Statewide Enterprise Discharge Summary Business Reference Group, which includes clinicians, will review the feedback to determine what actions may be required to improve the enterprise discharge summary for GPs.

Additionally, the Queensland Health Statewide Interest Group on Communicating for Safety will consider the coroner’s recommendation in relation to the revised Communicating for Safety Standard under the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. The standard is aimed at ensuring timely, purpose-driven and effective communication and documentation that support continuous, coordinated and safe care for patients. It requires that emerging or new critical information, alerts and risks are communicated in a timely manner to clinicians and to the patient, family and carer, to ensure safe patient care.

Queensland Health will progress the following activities during 2021:

- explore opportunities for improvement of hospital to primary care/GP communication with General Practice Liaison Network
- review feedback from the GP Survey and determine what actions may be required to improve the enterprise discharge summary for GPs
- progress proposed changes to enterprise discharge summary in consultation with eHealth Queensland
- convene the Statewide Interest Group on Communicating for Safety to consider the coroner’s Recommendation in relation to the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards.
Recommendation 3
Consideration be given to a community campaign targeted at licence holders reminding them of their obligations to immediately report to the Department of Transport and Main Roads any medical events (including seizures and epilepsy) which may impact on their fitness to drive.

Response and action: the recommendation is agreed to. How the recommendation will be implemented is under consideration.

Responsible agency: Department of Transport and Main Roads.

On 23 September 2020 the Minister for Transport and Main Roads responded:

The Department of Transport and Main Roads commenced planning activities to develop a road safety campaign to address this recommendation.

The department will undertake further planning and development work, including internal consultation regarding this initiative. The department intends on leveraging road safety partnerships to extend the reach of any proposed campaign.

On 31 March 2021 the Minister for Transport and Main Roads responded:

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is continuing planning and development activities regarding the proposed road safety campaign, in collaboration with road safety partners.

A funding source is to be identified to ensure that the proposed campaign will reach the target audience and have the desired impact.