

Recommendation Response from Department of Health Biannual Report – February 2025

Joseph Charles Abela died, aged 34 years, inside his Gosnells residence following a police shooting. Mr Abela had a significant history of suicide attempts, polysubstance use, and had multiple admissions to hospital. He was often non-compliant with treatment regimes. Upon being remanded in custody at Hakea he was placed on a Form 1A waiting for a bed at Frankland Centre to restart his depot medication. However, no beds were available, and he was released without receiving any medication. He was referred to the Armadale Community Mental Health Service by Hakea Prison. A mental health nurse undertaking a home visit noted he was able to demonstrate capacity and no further action was taken. On a later date, police officers attended his residence to carry out a mental health check. Mr Abela attacked two police officers and one officer discharged his firearm. Despite resuscitation attempts by police and ambulance officers, Mr Abela could not be revived.

Three recommendations were made relating to the management of prisoners who are subject of a Form 1A under the *Mental Health Act 2014 (WA)* when appearing before court, access to PSOLIS (Psychiatric Services Online Information System) by Department of Justice employees, and the management of the mental health of persons admitted to prison and subsequently released whilst subject of a Community Treatment Order (CTO).

The CRC reviewed these findings and noted the similarity of recommendation 2 in this case with another recommendation made following the Weston inquest relating to read-only access to PSOLIS. Members were interested to hear about the constraints which may prevent broader access to PSOLIS.

A Department of Health working group has been formed to explore a range of options to best support reciprocal sharing of information between WA health services and non-government organisations (NGOs).

In response to the Weston recommendation, Health Support Services has provisioned up to 45 Headspace staff with global read-only access to PSOLIS and webPSOLIS, and produced training materials to help users navigate both applications. Consultation with Headspace staff and other NGOs is a planned next step in early 2025 to review the effectiveness of the initial implementation and to identify the extent to which access to both applications meet clinical need. This consultation will inform a broader consideration of alternative options for reciprocal information sharing.

Consultation with the Department of Justice is planned in early 2025 to understand information requirements, noting a number of Department of Justice employed clinicians already have access to PSOLIS.

Consultation with major stakeholders regarding the provisioning processes and options for future governance for access to PSOLIS and other WA Health information continues, and this will address demand and capacity to support access as well as application stability and performance concerns.

The Department of Health has commenced discussions with the Department of Justice, initially through the Health Services Offenders Joint Operational Executive (HSOJOE) and will continue to engage with the Department of Justice and other major stakeholders to progress the third recommendation.

Recommendations 2 and 3 remain ongoing and updates will be provided in the next biannual report.