

April 1, 2022

BY E-MAIL

Shalee Kushnerick
Alberta Health Services
Associate General Counsel, Litigation
10030 107 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 3E4

Dear Ms. Kushnerick:

**Subject: Robert William Crowle – Public Fatality Inquiry
Response to Recommendations**

Please find enclosed a copy of the Honourable Judge S.L. Van de Veen's report to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. This report will be publicly released on April 22, 2022.

The following recommendation made by Her Honour may impact Alberta Health Services:

1. It is recommended that the Government of Alberta appoint a task force to address the glaring gaps in the mental health system noted by The Honourable Justice Wittmann and The Honourable Justice Iacobucci, which contribute to police commonly being first responders to people in crisis and emotionally disturbed individuals whose mental health issues have escalated to the point requiring police involvement. The complexity of this problem is considerable and as mentioned by Justice Iacobucci appears to be an aspect of modern society which several countries, as well as Canada, are grappling with. The only way to prevent dangerous encounters with police by persons in crisis and emotionally disturbed individuals is to prevent the crisis from occurring in the first place. This engages the challenge of an early intervention despite dealing with difficult people whose mental health issues fall short of incapacity, but nevertheless cause them to be unable to access the help they need. It involves not only police and mental health services, but also the scientific and academic communities in order to find solutions to the complex problem of police becoming first responders to people in crisis and emotionally disturbed individuals. A

recommendation for Alberta Health Services to carry an independent study of this problem was made in the Inquiry Report into the death of David William McQueen dated March 11, 2020.

It appears that an important opportunity was lost when Mr. Crowle was hospitalized September 12, 2016. No collateral contacts appear to have been consulted even though he had been hospitalized with significant injuries causing a severe brain injury. Expert evidence before the Inquiry is that hospital psychiatric staff dealing with patients like Mr. Crowle ought to consult third parties to secure the information they need to properly treat such patients. It appears matters were simply left without referrals or recommendations simply because he did not wish to press charges against his grandson who had inflicted the September injuries for which he was hospitalized. The evidence before the Inquiry is that the brain injury suffered by Mr. Crowle commonly results in aggressive and even suicidal behaviour and hospital records do not indicate whether follow-ups or referrals were either recommended or carried out.

Recommendation Number 1 has also been sent to Solicitor General requesting them to respond.

I ask that you please advise the following:

1. Whether Alberta Health Services accepts, accepts in principle, does not accept, or has a different response to the recommendations;
2. A brief explanation of why that decision was made; and
3. If Alberta Health Services intends to accept the recommendations, or to implement different measures, what steps will be taken in that regard.

A response to this enquiry is not mandatory. However, be advised that any response received will be publicly released and posted on the Open Government Portal:

<https://open.alberta.ca/opendata/responses-to-public-fatality-inquiry-recommendations>.

If a response has not been received by August 22, 2022, (four months after the public release date), that information will also be made publicly available.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours truly,

Abid Mavani

Abid Mavani
Fatality Inquiry Coordinator