



**MINISTER FOR POLICE; CORRECTIVE SERVICES; RACING AND GAMING;
DEFENCE INDUSTRY; VETERANS ISSUES**

Your Reference: PER/CORC/864/2019
Our Reference: 70-40942

Ms Dawn Wright
Manager Listings
Office of the State Coroner
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501 Hay Street
PERTH WA 6000

Email: coroner@justice.wa.gov.au

Dear Ms Wright

Thank you for your letter dated 10 January 2024, advising of Coroner Philip Urquhart's completion of the Inquest into the death of Mr Shane Nathan Roberts and for providing a copy of the Coroners Findings.

I can advise the Department of Justice (the Department) has finalised responses to all three recommendations designed to deliver better health care, particularly mental health care, to prisoners within Hakea. I have reviewed the responses (Attachment 1) and I am satisfied with the actions taken thus far and further actions planned to address the recommendations.

The Department will continue to monitor progress against the recommendations through regular reporting.

Yours sincerely

**HON PAUL PAPALIA CSC MLA
MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES**

Attachment 1: Coronial Recommendations – Shane Roberts

28 FEB 2024



Inquest into Death of Shane ROBERTS

Department of Justice Response to Coronial Recommendations

Recommendation No. 1

In order to improve the standard of health care to prisoners, the Department of Justice undertakes an assessment of employment contracts for prison health service providers to determine whether changes can be made that would:

- a) Encourage health service providers to remain working in the prison system; and
- b) Provide a motivation for suitably qualified health service providers to apply for positions within the prison system.

Response - Supported

Since Mr Roberts death, a concerted effort has been made to fill all vacant positions that provide health services to prisoners at Hakea. Following multiple recruitment processes undertaken by Health Services, all clinical nurse positions within Hakea's Health Centre are now occupied.

In attempt to attract suitably qualified service providers to apply for positions within the prison system, the Department is currently in the process of converting two registered nursing positions to clinical nurse positions. Once these positions are converted, suitable personnel will be appointed.

The Department has also appointed a Nurse Education Coordinator who provides support to existing health services staff and has established a Clinical Workforce Committee who meet fortnightly to identify and address critical skills shortages and staff retention issues across the prison estate.

The Department will consult with relevant corporate business areas to undertake an assessment of employment contracts for prison health service providers to determine whether further changes can be made to bolster recruitment to critical roles within prison health services and retain staff currently working within the prison health system.

Recommendation No. 2

In order to provide an appropriate level of mental health care and treatment for prisoners at Hakea, the Department of Justice should take urgent steps to recruit additional Psychological Health Services (PHS) and mental health staff for Hakea.

Response – Supported in principle

The Department has increased efforts to fill vacant PHS positions within Hakea. A recruitment process is currently underway to fill the last vacant PHS counsellor position. Recruitment to this role will see all but 0.6 of the 11 full-time-equivalent within Hakea's PHS team filled.

Whilst all PHS positions at Hakea are filled and/or appointment imminent, the Department will review the PHS and Mental Health staffing requirements at Hakea Prison and where necessary, will continue to advocate for funding for additional resources to meet the mental health needs of prisoners within Hakea through budget submissions.



Recommendation No. 3

In order to provide an appropriate level of health care and treatment for prisoners in Hakea, urgent funding be provided for a project definition plan regarding an extension of the facilities at Hakea that are used to provide health care (including counselling and mental health care) to prisoners.

Response – Supported in principle

The Department acknowledges the increased prisoner population and the volume of prisoners needing counselling and psychological health services has created a greater need to expand the health care facilities at Hakea. The expansion however is dependent on the allocation of additional funding.

As such, the Department will develop a submission to Treasury seeking funding to enable the development of a project definition plan for expanding the facilities at Hakea.