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49400-20/JANSEN

May 31, 2017

Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Province of British Columbia
PO Box 9259 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9J4

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

Re: Coroner's Report into the death of:
JANSEN, Brandon Juhani
BCCS Case File #2016-1027-0004

I am responding to your May 5, 2017 letter addressed to the Honourable Mike Morris in which you inquire as to action taken by the Corrections Branch regarding a jury recommendation arising from the coroner's inquest into the death of Brandon Juhani Jansen.

The Corrections Branch has an established standard of practice for inmate community release, including the development of individualized discharge plans to support inmates with substance abuse issues in the community and assistance in applying for social assistance and housing prior to release.

All inmates are screened at intake by medical professionals, including mental health screening and an examination of inmate's history of drug abuse, and are referred to physicians as necessary. This can include a referral to Opiate Agonist Therapy (OAT) for Suboxone or methadone for inmates who are identified as opiate-dependant. Inmates assessed with a substance-related disorder that requires intervention, and/or treatment, are referred to the substance use counsellor, and if indicated, the psychologist. The inmate may also be referred to an appropriate treatment program within the correctional facility or within the Adult Custody Division. Those admitted to custody, who are not already on OAT, may be referred for assessment for OAT. Physicians develop an individualized care plan for the inmate regardless of the length of the inmate's sentence.

Physicians are required to follow guidelines set by the College of Physicians and Surgeons in administering methadone maintenance. To facilitate OAT continuation after release from custody, an individualized discharge plan is considered at initiation and confirmed prior to release, where possible. Whether or not a community prescriber is identified at the time of discharge, the patient is provided with a bridging prescription of methadone or Suboxone, as appropriate, of two to four weeks depending on the inmate's needs and circumstances.

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Protect Communities, Reduce Reoffending

**Ministry of
Public Safety and
Solicitor General**

Corrections Branch
Office of the
Assistant Deputy Minister

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Physicians are required to follow guidelines set by the College of Physicians and Surgeons in administering methadone maintenance. To facilitate OAT continuation after release from custody, an individualized discharge plan is considered at initiation and confirmed prior to release, where possible. Patients on OAT leaving correctional centres are encouraged and assisted in returning to their community prescriber or sourcing a new prescriber upon release.

Mental health and substance use treatment focuses on restoring the patient's mental and physical health and assisting the patient to receive services when released to the community. When possible, the services of a forensic liaison, a mental health worker, and/or a community substance use program or worker are enlisted to arrange post-release community services.

In addition, the BC College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCCPS) has made changes to the prescribing rules for physicians that have resulted in Suboxone becoming more readily accessible. Our policy updates reflect these changes, including:

- identifying Suboxone as the Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) of choice
- clarifying that there is no minimum amount of time in custody required to participate in OAT
- removing the requirement for a community prescriber to participate in OAT

The Corrections Branch has recently made an agreement with the Provincial Health Services Authority to transition the delivery of health and mental health services at our correctional centres, effective October 1, 2017. This change will enhance the quality of health care, mental health and substance use supports for inmates in custody and facilitate a more seamless transition to health and mental health services in the community.

Incarcerated individuals are ineligible to receive benefits under the *BC Employment and Assistance Regulations (2015, Part 2, 3.15)*, and these individuals must requalify for benefits on release. The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI) Special Circumstances policy expedites application and qualification for applicants who are pre-release prisoners. The policy states the applicant will proceed to a shortened application process and be assessed for Hardship Assistance – Immediate Need and the work search requirement can be completed within a three month period of receipt of assistance. The Corrections Branch utilizes this expedited process for exiting inmates who have served a minimum of 90 days. These qualified inmates are released with an income assistance cheque.

In accordance with MSDSI regulations, inmates serving less than 90 days must proceed through the routine community process.

Corrections will continue to work with MSDSI to develop protocols to better assist inmates to apply for social assistance and housing prior to release.

Yours sincerely,



Elenore Arend
Assistant Deputy Minister

pc: Michael Egilson