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Ms. Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
PO Box 9259 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J4

Dear Ms. Lapointe: *Lisa*

Thank you for your letter of May 27, 2020, regarding the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Matthew Charles Miles. The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) has carefully reviewed the recommendation and has outlined its response to the Jury's recommendation that was directed to the Ministry.

Jury Recommendation #1 to the Ministry of Health:

Improve and promote the awareness of mental health and addiction resources and promote how the public can access them.

Presiding Coroner Comment:

The jury heard evidence from a witness that she did not believe that calling the police regarding persons with mental health issue would result in any significant action being taken.

Ministry Response:

The Ministry supports this recommendation.

The Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), Ministry of Education (EDUC), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) and health authorities (HAs) are working in partnership to improve and promote the awareness and accessibility of mental health and substance use (MHSU) services in British Columbia.

In June 2019, MMHA released "*A Pathway to Hope: A roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people in British Columbia*". The roadmap sets the foundation for a 10-year vision for mental health and addictions care for people in BC, in which mental health and wellbeing are supported from youth to adulthood and programs and services are easily available to address MHSU challenges early on.

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MHSU services in BC can be assessed through many pathways including online web-based resources, primary care services, community MHSU services, local community social services, crisis intervention services, and MHSU acute and tertiary care services. In the attached Appendix 1, you will find examples of the various MHSU services across the MHSU continuum that provides guidance to individuals about the wide range of MHSU services available in BC and how to access these services.

A major initiative to improve access to MHSU services is the development of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and MHSU Specialized Community Services Programs (SCSP) in BC.

A PCN is a network of family practices (including traditional General Practitioner-owned family practices, community-governed health centres, and HA-operated primary care clinics) in a defined geographic area, linked with each other and with other primary care services delivered by HA and community-based organizations.

PCNs will provide increased access to MHSU services for individuals with mild to moderate MHSU issues, including:

- Screening, assessment, early identification and management of mild to moderate conditions, and complex, yet stable, MHSU disorders;
- Individual, group, and online counselling;
- Pharmacological treatment and medication monitoring;
- Rapid access to crisis intervention services;
- Harm reduction resources; and
- Tools to increase resilience.

MHSU SCSPs are operated by HAs and responsible for providing specialized MHSU assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and support services for people with moderate to severe MHSU disorders. Foundational attributes of MHSU SCSPs include designated leadership, a single point of contact and simplified access to assessment and treatment services, integrated service delivery, team-based care, and extended hours of operation.

PCNs will be linked closely with SCSPs and the full implementation and functionality of PCNs and SCSPs are both expected by the end of 2020/21.

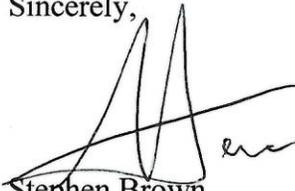
In addition, a collaboration between MMHA, the Ministry, PSSG and HAs has resulted in improved responses to people in mental health crisis and linking people to appropriate MHSU services. The provincial report "*Interfaces Between Mental Health and Substance Use Services and Police 2018*" addresses the intersection of policing, the MHSU system of care and the justice system. Ministries, HAs, police agencies and other key partners are working collaboratively to support this area by providing increased access to MHSU services for people experiencing a mental health crisis. See the following website for further details:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/police-interface-report.pdf?bcgovtm=CSMLS>

The Ministry recognizes that the current MHSU system of care can be challenging to access appropriate MHSU services and the Ministry in partnership with MMHA is supporting the MHSU collaborative crisis intervention work outlined above and the development of PCNs and MHSU SCSPs to improve access to MHSU services in BC.

Thank you for providing the Ministry with the opportunity to respond to these recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Brown', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Stephen Brown
Deputy Minister

Attachment

Appendix 1:

Mental health and substance use services (MHSU) in BC can be accessed through many pathways including; online web-based resources, primary care (general physicians), community mental health and substance use services, community social services, community crisis intervention services, and mental health and substance acute and tertiary care services. Please find below examples of MHSU services that provides guidance to people with MHSU challenges how to access local, regional and provincial MHSU services in BC:

Examples of online web-based resources include:

- HealthLinkBC: 24 hour health information service, providing a listing by community of local mental health and substance use services, accessible via phone 8-1-1, or visit www.healthlinkbc.ca
- HeretoHelp is an information web-based service with extensive information of MHSU disorders and services, includes a listing of mental health and addictions resources for families and clients with mental health/substance use challenges, see: <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/>
- Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre: provides information and supports to families including peer support and support to navigate the mental health system of care, see : <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/>
- Bounceback: an online web-based service that provides mental health supports a coach and online tools, <https://bouncebackbc.ca/>

Examples of Community mental health and substance use services:

- Foundry: A walk-in MHSU service for young people with MHSU challenges, including supports to access local, regional and provincial mental wellness supports for young people, see: <https://foundrybc.ca/>
- Child and Youth Mental Health Clinics (CYMH): 100 Walk-in intake clinics, see <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/child-teen-mental-health/mental-health-intake-clinics>
- YMind and YMind Medicine: These programs focus on providing early emotional and social supports to teens and youth with mild-to-moderate anxiety and/or depression, see: <https://www.gv.ymca.ca/mental-wellness>
- MindHealthBC: A one stop shop that provides information about evidence-based MHSU resources available in your community and combines them into one easy to use website: <http://www.mindhealthbc.ca/>

Examples of Community social services:

- Community-based low and no-cost MHSU services are provided by community counselling programs (awarded through community action initiative) throughout the province funded by the Ministry. Examples of funded organizations include:
 - a network of Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver,
 - Carrier Sekani Family Services in Prince George,
 - DIVERSE City Community Resources in Surrey,
 - Independent Living Vernon Society, and
 - Ishtar Women's Resource Society in Langley/Aldergrove.

For more information, see: <https://communityactioninitiative.ca/grants-training/community-counselling-fund-grants/>

Examples of Community crisis intervention services:

- Crisis Line Association of BC provides confidential, non-judgmental, free emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including thoughts of suicide: 1-800-SUICIDE (1 (800) 784-2433) for crisis and 310-Mental Health Support (310-6789) for information and support., see <https://www.crisislines.bc.ca/>
- Kids Help Phone: Immediate and caring support, information and, if necessary, referral to a local community or social service agency. Phone toll-free: 1 (800) 668-6868. See <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/our-impact-in-the-community/british-columbia>
- Youth in BC Distress Line: 24-hour distress line staffed by counsellors and trained volunteers who are committed to helping youths in crisis. Phone: (604) 872-3311. See <https://youthinbc.com/>
- Mobile Crisis Outreach consists of partnerships between health authorities and local police departments to support individuals experiencing mental health crises. There are 5 MHSU-Police crisis response teams based out of Kamloops, Prince George, Surrey, Vancouver, and Victoria. (Car 60, 67, 86 and 87)

Each HA manages publicly funded MHSU services and developed detailed on-line information about their MHSU services within their HA, including how to access these services, see:

- Fraser Health Authority: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/mental-health-and-substance-use#.XwdsjtN8A2w>
- Interior Health Authority: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourCare/MentalHealthSubstanceUse/Pages/default.aspx>
- Island Health Authority: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-services/mental-health-substance-use-services>
- Northern Health Authority: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/services/mental-health-substance-use>
- Provincial Health Services Authority: <http://www.bcmhsus.ca/>
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority: <http://www.vch.ca/your-care/mental-health-substance-use>