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everywhere, every time.



May 3, 2019

Ms. Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
PO Box 9259
Stn Prov Gov
Victoria, BC V8W 9J4

RECEIVED

MAY 08 2019

CHIEF CORONER

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

Re: Coroner's Recommendations: Coroner's Verdict at Inquest into the death of Salvany Sailes, Juan Carlos, Case No: 2016-0380-0010

Thank you for your letter of March 19, 2019 requesting consideration of recommendations in the above-referenced case. Kathy MacNeil, President and CEO of Island Health, has asked I reply to your request for a response from Island Health to Recommendation number 3, directed at all health authorities, of the Verdict at the Inquest. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this recommendation.

Recommendation 3: Re-examine the importance of mental health treatment in regards to addiction recovery, and to make available mental health services on-site to support clients.

Island Health's Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) service is committed to providing both mental health and substance use programs in a manner that meets the ongoing needs of clients, as well as delivering a timely and effective response for urgent or emergent concerns.

The continued integration of mental health and substance use services remains a priority for Island Health as part of a systems approach to substance use services. Island Health supports clients' changing levels of mental health and substance use needs by providing a range of services from early intervention to intensive residential treatment.

Island Health has policies and guidelines for clinical providers that cover suicide risk screening and assessment, including in a crisis. Staff are required to complete training and demonstrate competence to support high risk/rising risk clients. Program leadership monitors individual staff training completion and reviews completion of suicide screeners and assessments through monthly file audits.

Island Health's substance use and mental health services are often co-located across our service area, which enables a single point of access for clients living with a substance use challenge, a mental health concern, or both conditions. This integration is available for people in both urban centres and smaller communities; for example, mental health and substance use counselling services can be accessed at the Quadra Clinic in Victoria and at the Roger Street clinic in Port Alberni. Our access and intake services have been, and continue to be, strengthened to fully integrate access to both substance use and mental

Executive Office

Located at: 2101 Richmond Road | Victoria, BC V8R 4R7 Canada
Mailing address: 1952 Bay Street | Victoria, BC V8R 1J8 Canada

Tel: 250-370-8699 | Fax: 250-370-8750
viha.ca

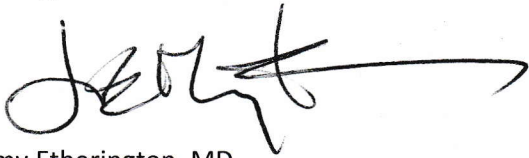
health services. In many communities, Island Health now offers same day, walk-in services for mental health and substance use. This is in addition to outreach crisis, urgent and rapid response services focused on both mental health and substance use concerns.

Island Health recognizes there are opportunities to further strengthen the connections between mental health and substance use programs, especially as significant program enhancements are underway in substance use services as part of the opioid crisis response. Through integration of practitioners, concurrent training, and the recent development of the Recovery Oriented Care Framework, staff and physicians are encouraged to consider the continuum of people's needs.

Many mental health and substance use services delivered in the community are provided by community agencies under contract and with funding provided by Island Health. As these contracts are monitored, Island Health is committed to assessing the performance of the contract against required deliverables, including training requirements. Through our ongoing relationships with our contracted partners, we aim to provide support with training, referral pathways, clinical outreach to service locations, and availability for consultations when needed. This work includes supporting awareness of how clients can access specialized MHSU services, crisis response and on-site outreach services as needed.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding the information we have provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Etherington', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeremy Etherington, MD
Vice-President Medicine, Quality and Academic Affairs & Chief Medical Officer

cc Kathy MacNeil, President & CEO
Dr. Richard Crow, Executive Medical Director, Population and Community Health
Cheryl Damstetter, Vice President, Priority Populations and Initiatives