

Question on Notice

No. 853

Asked on 17 June 2021

MS A CAMM asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION

With reference to the recommendations made by Deputy Coroner Jane Bentley in the Inquest into the death of Mason Jet Lee—

Will the Minister provide an update on (a) the recommendations made, (b) of those, the ones which were (i) agreed to, (ii) agreed in principle or (iii) rejected and (c) of those agreed to or agreed in principle, a list of those that have been (i) implemented, (ii) are currently being implemented and (iii) have not yet commenced?

ANSWER

On 2 June 2020, six coronial recommendations were delivered following the inquest into the death of Mason Jett Lee.

(a) The recommendations made were:

- Recommendation 1 – The SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect) manual and relevant legislation, policies and procedures should be amended to mandate that when a family is engaged with a service provider, and that family's matter is referred to SCAN:
 - the external support worker must be invited to attend all SCAN meetings relevant to that family, and
 - information held by the SCAN members must be shared with the external support worker.
- Recommendation 2 – The Queensland Department of Health should implement formal policies and procedures for the escalation of a case in which medical officers disagree with a decision made by the department in relation to the discharge from hospital of a child.
- Recommendation 3 – Procedures and policies for the provision of information to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) should be reviewed to ensure that information held by the department is provided to QPS, upon request, in a timely manner and without redactions and the QPS should report annually for the next three years to the Coroners Court of Queensland on the number, if any, of search warrants executed on the department for the provision of information in relation to children who are subject to a joint investigation.
- Recommendation 4 – The SCAN manual and relevant legislation, policies and procedures should be amended to require cases to remain open to SCAN until appropriate feedback has been provided to core members and it is agreed that the recommendations have been fulfilled, or if not fulfilled, are no longer appropriate, and that no further recommendations are appropriate.
- Recommendation 5 – The SCAN manual and relevant legislation, policies and procedures should be amended to mandate that when a SCAN meeting is inquorate, the available members nevertheless hold a case planning discussion about the matters that would have been subject to the meeting.

– Recommendation 6

- a) The department should review its policies and procedures to ensure that, in accordance with the Government's acceptance of Recommendation 7.4 of the Carmody Inquiry:
 - (i) Adoption is routinely and genuinely considered as a suitable permanency option for children in out-of-home care where re-unification or unification is unlikely, and should be pursued in those cases, particularly for children aged under three years.
 - (ii) Adoption is routinely and genuinely considered by Child Safety officers as one of the permanency options open to them when deciding where to place a child in out of home care.
- b) The Government should consider whether the *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld) should similarly reflect the 2018 amendments to the *Adoption Act 2000* (NSW), expecting children to be permanently placed through out of home adoptions within 24 months of entering the department's care.
- c) The department should report to the Coroners Court of Queensland the numbers of children adopted and the details of those matters, every six months for the next five years.

(b) All recommendations were accepted in full by the Queensland Government.

(c) Of the six recommendations:

- (i) Recommendations 1,3, 4, 5 and 6 have been implemented.
- (ii) Recommendation 2 is being implemented. This is being led by Queensland Health and supported by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs.
- (iii) There are no recommendations yet to commence.