



**AUCKLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD**

Communications

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## **ADHB Media Release**

**December 17, 2010**

### **Vladimir Urlich Coronial Report**

Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) today acknowledged the Coroner's Report into the death of patient Vladimir Urlich in November, 2007.

Director of Mental Health Services Dr Clive Bensemman said Mr Urlich's death was a tragedy that had affected not only his family but also ADHB staff involved in his care.

"We extend our sympathy to Mr Urlich's family and friends and we hope the Coroner's report will be of some comfort to them," Dr Bensemman said.

"The report offers observations about clinical practice three years ago at the time of Mr Urlich's death.

"The Coroner acknowledged that ADHB was aware of the shortcomings identified and recommendations were not required.

"ADHB has since addressed many of these points through an external review. The review resulted in several system changes in our mental health service, particularly around engagement with family members of patients. A seven-day follow-up with patients discharged into community care is now one of our critical key performance indicators.

"ADHB is also in the process of revising its absence without leave (AWOL) policy to clarify wording and the involvement of senior medical staff in categorisation of the seriousness of the AWOL episode.

“The changes as a result of the external review and the AWOL review have introduced significant additional checks and balances to the system to protect patients at-risk of self-harm.

“Whilst we understand this will be of little comfort to Mr Ulrich’s loved ones, the community can have confidence that ADHB’s mental health services are operating under a modern best-practice framework.”

**ENDS**

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