

INQUIRY INTO CORONIAL JURISDICTION IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Mr Robert Wade

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When police attack people disabled through mental illness, coroners should explore the medical aspects of the mental illness

Fiona Barbieri had schizophrenia for 4 years before police attacked her in her locked home.

She had sought help from an unknown number of GPs and been forced into Nepean Hospital for 5 days, without being diagnosed or properly treated.

I wrote to the Minister for Mental Health asking if she would hold a public inquiry.

She replied that she was advised that the coroner was the appropriate person to do any investigation.

That reply usefully explains her values and why NSW has such poor psychiatry.

It would be useful to have some statement of whether the coroner does or should have such a role, to the exclusion of that minister.

The Inquest delivered by Coroner Teresa O'Sullivan paid no useful attention to how the Barbieris were left to their fate with the police. She did make and permit numerous derogatory references to their illnesses.

It would have been appropriate for the coroner to make recommendations about the state's failure to even attempt to learn anything from this totally preventable disaster.

Attached is a submission to the Coroner prior to the findings.

Yours sincerely
Robert Wade