

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Andrew Jenner MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

QUESTION:

“A few weeks ago, I called into your office (Andrew’s office) and spoke to your colleague regarding an incident in Richmond. It appears that if an ambulance is called in an emergency and the patient dies in the presence of the paramedics, the paramedics cannot take the person to the mortuary. On this occasion the dead man was left on the nature strip for four hours before a mortuary van arrived. That is a totally unacceptable situation, and I see no reason why an ambulance can't take a dead person to hospital. After all, if he had died in the ambulance, it would have been a different matter. I hope that you have been able to take this matter up with the health minister”

ANSWER:

Thank you for providing additional detail to my office. Unfortunately, without the consent of the person’s next of kin I am not able to obtain more specific detail on the circumstances. If consent is able to be provided from the person’s next of kin, Ambulance Tasmania can undertake an investigation.

I would also like to pass on my sincere condolences to the loved ones of the person for their loss.

Speaking generally, I am advised that Ambulance Tasmania clinicians are guided by the Declaration of Life Extinct Procedure, Transport and Management of a Deceased Person Procedure, and CPG A0203-2 Declaration of Life Extinct and After Death Care.

Ambulance Tasmania paramedics do have the ability to transfer deceased patients to Emergency Departments in some circumstances, particularly where the death is in a public place, subject to Tasmania Police investigation considerations.

In the case of a death in a public place, the procedure states that Tasmania Police are to be notified. I am advised that, in this case, Tasmania Police were first on the scene, and therefore the decision regarding transport rested with Tasmania Police, based on their investigation considerations.

I am further advised that once Tasmania Police arrive and take control of the scene, if the responding paramedics are not required to provide transport, they are then released to undertake other emergency cases in the community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JP', with a large loop at the bottom left.

Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

Date: 7/4/25