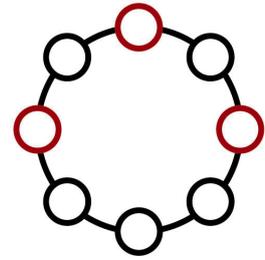


NCIS News

Edition 19 - January 2018



NCIS

NATIONAL CORONIAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

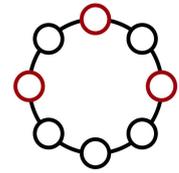
WELCOME

In this edition of NCIS News, we are pleased to announce the launch of our new website in early 2018. This edition also contains highlights from the 2016-17 Annual Report, an overview of a fact sheet recently published by the NCIS and information regarding our user audit processes.

As always, we love hearing from our users and welcome any feedback. If you would like to comment on any of the items in this newsletter or would like further information, please contact us at ncis@ncis.org.au.

IN THIS ISSUE

Annual Report 2016-2017	page 2
New NCIS Website	page 2
NCIS Usage Audit Process	page 3
Recent Events	page 3
Intentional Self-Harm Fatalities Fact Sheet: Indigenous Australians	page 5
Research Data Reports	page 6
Third Party Access Applications	page 6
Staff Movements	page 7
NCIS Statistics	page 8
NCIS Data References	page 9
NCIS in the News	page 11
Staff Contact Details & Feedback	page 12



NCIS ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The NCIS Annual Report for 2016-17 is now available on the NCIS website (www.ncis.org.au).

Some of the highlights from the report include:

Key Performance Measures

Research Reports

- 121 data reports produced for external parties and death investigators
- 30% increase in the number of data reports requested by coronial death investigators

Case Closure

- 24,406 cases closed on the NCIS (↑23%)

Quality Assurance

- 25,237 cases quality assured (↑24%)

External Publications

- 102 active projects utilising NCIS data
- 61 professional and peer reviewed papers published utilising NCIS data

User Training

- 18 search training sessions provided to 31 researchers

Focus of the NCIS in 2017-18

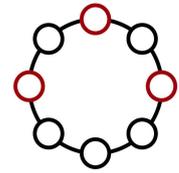
- The implementation of the revised alcohol and drug codeset.
- Targeted coder training to reduce errors at point of data entry.
- A continued effort to reduce the backlog of cases awaiting quality review.

NEW NCIS WEBSITE

In September 2017, the NCIS sought your feedback on our public website (www.ncis.org.au), as it was identified that the user experience could be improved. Over 50 people provided feedback on the website through a survey that was distributed to NCIS users. The results of the survey were analysed and used to shape the format of the new website.

The NCIS are pleased to announce that our new website will be launched in early 2018. The website will contain updated content and has been designed for ease of navigation. Please note that these changes will not affect the NCIS database.

This exciting development will ensure who we are, what we do and how we can help you is evident from our website.



NCIS USAGE AUDIT PROCESS

In 2011, the NCIS introduced data usage audits. Data usage audits are conducted to ensure the data on the NCIS is being accessed appropriately and for approved purposes as specified in the agreements held by the NCIS and individuals users. Usage audits are performed randomly and on all types of usage including death investigators and researchers.

NCIS usage audits are conducted quarterly, when a number of third party researcher and death investigator accounts are randomly selected for audit. The search history is reviewed and if any queries arise, the NCIS Access Liaison Officer will contact the user for further clarification.

Should you have any questions or concerns in regards to the auditing process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

In addition, the NCIS also regularly audit user accounts for inactivity. If an account remains inactive for a certain period of time (6-12 months) the Administration Officer will contact the user to verify the account and establish if access is still required.

Both audit types are conducted to ensure the security and integrity of the system is maintained.

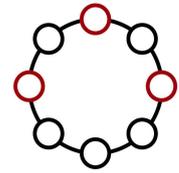
RECENT EVENTS

The NCIS Quality Assistant, Dannielle Murphy and the NCIS Strategy and Development Manager, Eva Saar attended the biennial Australian Injury Prevention Network (AIPN) conference, held in Ballarat, Victoria from 12 to 15 November.

Catherine King, MP, Member for Ballarat provided the official welcome to her home town for the delegates and set the scene for a busy three days to come. The conference theme "Take Action" was well reflected throughout the presentations, with over one hundred speakers discussing challenges and opportunities for meaningful injury prevention.

A large number of themed sessions were held during the conference which each featured a range of panel speakers focussing on a particular topic, including workplace safety, suicide and self-harm, road safety as well as ageing and falls prevention.

A dedicated session on the use of data for injury prevention reinforced the importance of basing all initiatives for injury prevention on a solid foundation of evidence. With data and evidence being at the core of all operations of the NCIS, this was a welcome opportunity to forge relationships and explore opportunities for further collaborations.



RECENT EVENTS

The NCIS Manager, Natalie Johnson, attended two conferences in recent months—the Asia Pacific Coroners Society Conference and the Stop Domestic Violence Conference.

Coroners Conference

The annual Asia Pacific Coroners Society Conference was held in Adelaide from the 31st of October to the 3rd of November.

Keynote speaker Marshall Perron, former Northern Territory Chief Minister, spoke about the right to die for the terminally ill and challenged the presumption that all unnatural death should be prevented. His presentation was engaging and influential, and utilised information from the NCIS about intentional self-harm deaths among the terminally ill. Mr Perron was very complimentary about both the quality of the data and the service he received from the team.

Another highly topical issue addressed at the conference was that of fatalities resultant from family violence. A panel discussion was held with Atena Abrahamzadeh, whose mother was murdered by her father in Adelaide in 2010. South Australian State Coroner Mark Johns conducted the inquest and was also a member on the panel. The discussion focused on the experience of the family with the police in initially reporting family violence, the response and how this did not adequately make the family safe, the coronial inquest and what has changed since the recommendations from that inquest, including a cultural change among SA Police. The discussion was shocking, saddening and inspiring.

The conference involved three days of very high quality presentations about many aspects of coronial and forensic investigation. Varied topics were discussed by authoritative speakers such as child protection, predatory journals, Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP), facial recognition technology and the inquest into the Lindt cafe siege.

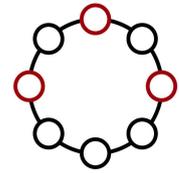
A lot was covered over the three days, including presentations as well as the opportunity to catch up informally. This is the third Coroners Conference attended by Natalie and she was pleased to note an increase in knowledge about the NCIS and usage of the system by the coronial and forensic delegates over time.

Stop Domestic Violence Conference

The Stop Domestic Violence conference was held in Melbourne from the 4th to the 6th of December.

Over three days, 120 speakers from different organisations presented around the theme “Domestic Violence Does Not Discriminate.” A diverse range of topics were discussed including violence prevention, managing perpetrators and the impact of domestic violence in the workplace. Gender inequality was frequently identified as being at the heart of the issue, contributing to violence against women in all its forms and severity.

Overall, the conference was positive and compassionate and highlighted the valuable work being carried out within the sector.



INTENTIONAL SELF-HARM FATALITIES FACT SHEET: INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

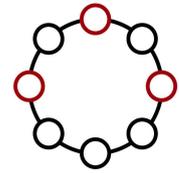
The NCIS produces fact sheets on topics of high interest, which are then made publicly available on the NCIS website. These facts sheets outline mortality trends and are developed in consultation with key stakeholders and experts in the respective subject areas. Their purpose is to provide evidence-based information to the general public in a way that is easily understood and can help inform public debate. Having received a large number of requests for information on intentional self-harm fatalities involving Indigenous persons, the NCIS recently published, *Intentional Self-Harm Fatalities Fact Sheet: Indigenous Australians*.

Key findings of the article have been summarised below, with the full fact sheet available at <http://www.ncis.org.au/mortality-data-from-the-ncis/mortality-data-statistics-and-internal-reports/>.

The report identified 1,440 intentional self-harm fatalities involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The number of fatalities remained consistent over the 13 year period, averaging two deaths per week. Across both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, males were three times more likely than females to die as a result of an act of intentional self-harm. When compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts, incidence of intentional self-harm fatalities amongst persons aged 15 to 44 years was three times more likely to occur in Indigenous Australians. The rate of intentional self-harm fatalities among Indigenous persons was highest in the Northern Territory (31.8 deaths per 100,000 persons) and Western Australia (29.5 per 100,000 persons). The rate of intentional self-harm fatalities among Indigenous persons was lowest in New South Wales and Tasmania. These were the only jurisdictions in which the rate of intentional self-harm fatalities among non-Indigenous Australians was higher than that of Indigenous Australians. The rate of Indigenous intentional self-harm deaths was determined via division of the total number of Indigenous fatalities by the Indigenous population count, sourced from the ABS 2011 Census Time Series Community Profile.

The report also provided insight into the large number of recommendations that have been made by Coroners in relation to Indigenous Australian intentional self-harm fatalities. Between 2001 and 2013, 201 coronial recommendations were made in a total of 52 deaths. These recommendations covered areas such as education and employment, medical care and mental health services, policing, child protection, prison and prisoner health services, alcohol and other drugs, living conditions and housing.

The NCIS invites follow up queries about the information included in this fact sheet and offers a data report service, where specific data can be provided upon request. If you are interested in requesting a data report, please contact the NCIS Unit at ncis@ncis.org.au.



RESEARCH DATA REPORTS

The NCIS Research Report service experienced significant productivity throughout 2017, including in the most recent quarter. The most recent quarter involved the production of twelve data reports and twenty-five coronial reports, with a number of additional reports anticipated to be finalised in the early new year. Common areas of interest included intentional self-harm, drowning and fire-related fatalities, as well as deaths in custody.

Current concerns regarding fatalities related to prescription drug use (including opioids and antipsychotics) continue to be reflected in requests from Coroners and external parties alike, with six reports produced relating to deaths of this kind since October. These reports will have a significant impact on measures to reduce drug-related death and harms, such as the implementation of a real-time prescription monitoring scheme in Victoria.

University of Melbourne student, Richard Pagone, recently completed his internship with the NCIS as part of his Masters of Criminology. Richard's substantive project involved the production of a report regarding barriers to amphetamine-related fatality research in Australia. The NCIS Unit congratulates Richard on the completion of his internship and degree, and wishes him all the best in his future endeavours.

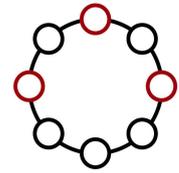
THIRD PARTY ACCESS APPLICATIONS

Since July 2017, there have been ten new third party applications to the NCIS. These applications have been received from three different types of research organisations including Academic Institutions, Hospitals, and Health and Transport Agencies.

The applications span a range of subject areas including Drugs & Alcohol, Intentional Self-Harm, Homicide & Assault, Transport & Traffic Related, and Fire Related.

The next NCIS closing date for new and renewing applications is Wednesday 31st January 2018. All applications received by this date will be considered at the JHREC meeting on Thursday 15th March.

Applicants are reminded that if their application is requesting access to Victorian data that this must be submitted to the Coroners Court of Victoria Research Committee for consideration before it can be submitted to the JHREC.



STAFF MOVEMENTS

In recent months, there have been a number of staff transitions within the NCIS team.

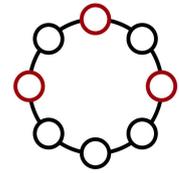
In November, the NCIS Research and Engagement Manager, Thomas Burgess, was successful in securing a position with the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet. Thomas has been with the NCIS for four years, beginning his tenure as an intern and working in various roles within the research team. The NCIS wishes him all the best in his new role as Senior Policy Officer, Public Sector Reform and Performance.

In early January 2018, the NCIS team will farewell Eva Saar, Strategy and Development Manager. After almost five years with the NCIS, Eva has accepted a role as National Manager, Research and Evaluation, with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). This is an exciting opportunity for Eva and we will miss her but wish her well in her next professional challenge.

Caitlin Ring, Administration Officer, has accepted a six month secondment as a Data Policy Officer with the Crime Statistics Agency. Caitlin has been an integral part of the NCIS team for over 12 months, and whilst we wish her all the best, we eagerly await her return in July 2018!

Alice Bussey, Junior Quality Assistant, will step into the role of Administration Assistant and has already made a start in handover.

Finally, we welcome Luisa Hope as our new Research Assistant. Luisa holds a Masters of Criminology and as a part of her degree, undertook an internship with the NCIS in 2015. Luisa will be involved in research projects and quality assurance activities over the next six months.



NCIS STATISTICS

Case closure and Document Attachment Rates for all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand cases 2000-2017

1. NCIS case closure rates by jurisdiction as of 1st December 2017

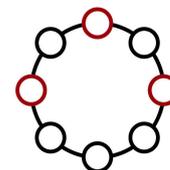
Jurisdiction	% cases closed
ACT	96%
NSW	89%
NT	95%
QLD	92%
SA	94%
TAS	93%
VIC	86%
WA	92%
NZ*	89%

* The NCIS only contains closed cases from New Zealand, however this figure for NZ indicates the proportion of closed cases on the NCIS as a function of all NZ Coronial cases (open and closed), as indicated by the NZ Coronial Services Centre.

2. NCIS case document attachment by jurisdiction as of 1st December 2017

Jurisdiction	Autopsy	Finding	Toxicology	Police
ACT	93%	98%	74%	98%
NSW	75%	62%	66%	55%
NT	93%	97%	73%	97%
QLD	67%	65%	40%	97%
SA	0%	99%	25%	100%
TAS	83%	90%	90%	98%
VIC	94%	92%	97%	90%
WA	77%	97%	90%	100%
NZ	98%	98%	80%	97%

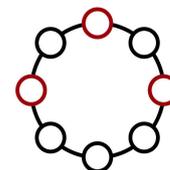
Further detail related to the above statistics are available at:
<http://www.ncis.org.au/data-collection-2/operational-statistics/>



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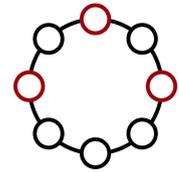


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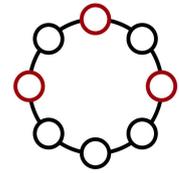
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NCIS IN THE NEWS

Recent media articles in print, radio and online that have referenced the NCIS include:

- Cohen, H. (2017). Fentanyl crisis: Figures show 1,800pc rise in overdose deaths from potent painkiller. Retrieved November 30, 2017, from <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-24/deaths-from-prescription-drug-fentanyl-up-by-1800pc/9184396>
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FEEDBACK

The NCIS welcomes any comments, suggestions or queries about the content of this newsletter or the NCIS generally.

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