



## Meegan Fitzharris MLA

Minister for Health and Wellbeing  
Minister for Higher Education  
Minister for Medical and Health Research  
Minister for Transport  
Minister for Vocational Education and Skills  
Member for Yerrabi

Senator Malarndirri McCarthy  
Chair  
Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education  
PO Box 6100, Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Sent via email: [stillbirth.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:stillbirth.sen@aph.gov.au).

Dear Senator McCarthy

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2018 about questions on notice from the Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education.

The questions raised on notice were:

1. For how long can a body be stored in an ACT Morgue? Is this time limit articulated in legislation, regulation or policy?
2. How many deceased babies have been left in ACT morgues for longer than 3 months?
  - a. What were the circumstances of those babies (that is, was the baby Indigenous or non-Indigenous, and what was the cause of the baby's death)?

There is no legislation regarding the storage time for bodies in a hospital mortuary, however, ACT Pathology has a local policy which states:

*"If no communication has been received concerning the release of a body after three business days have elapsed from the date of admission, the Canberra Hospital social work department should be contacted. All known details of the deceased should be conveyed to the social workers for follow-up".*

There have been no deceased babies left in the Canberra Hospital mortuary cool room for a period longer than 3 months.

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### ACT Legislative Assembly

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I hope the answers provided satisfies the questions raised.

Yours sincerely

Meegan Fitzharris MLA  
Minister for Health and Wellbeing

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