



## Chief Executive

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File No: XXXXXXXX

Ms Naomi Bleeser  
Committee Secretary  
Community Affairs References Committee  
EM: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Ms Bleeser

Re: Questions on Notice from Inquiry into Suicide in Australia

I write to provide a response to questions on notice received by ACT Health at the Inquiry into Suicide in Australia on 25 March 2010.

During our representation The Committee asked two questions on notice:

1. Do ACT families receive notes left by individuals who have ended their life by suicide?
2. How many child deaths resulting from suicide occur in the ACT?

The following information is provided in relation to the above questions:

### Notes left by individuals who have ended their life by suicide

The ACT Coroners Office has advised ACT Health that in approximately 90 per cent of cases, notes left by an individual who has ended their life by suicide are provided to the family if requested. A decision to provide the note to family members is made by the Coroner on the basis of whether or not it is perceived that provision of the note is in the best interest of the family. If the note is of a vexatious nature and it is deemed that providing the note to the family would cause additional long-term harm, the Coroner may decide that the note should not be provided. If the note is provided, the family will either receive a copy of the note after the death or be provided with the original note at the completion of the inquest.

Child deaths resulting from suicide in the ACT

Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997-2007 ACT confidentialised unit record data indicates that there have been 25 deaths of young people between the ages of 15 and 19 during this 10 year period. This is an average of 2.5 deaths per year, with a range from zero to six. There were no recorded deaths by suicide under the age of 15 years.

I trust that this information meets the needs of The Committee.

Yours sincerely

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~~Df Peggy Brown~~  
**Chief Executive**

14 April 2010