



**STATE CORONER'S COURT
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Inquest:	Inquest into the death of Mr Edward Curic aka Grahovac
Hearing dates:	12 March 2026
Date of findings:	20 May 2026
Place of findings:	Coroners Court of New South Wales at Lidcombe
Findings of:	Judge Joan Baptie, Deputy State Coroner
Catchwords:	CORONIAL LAW – Death in Custody, significant comorbidities, care and treatment whilst in custody
File number:	2022/00148180
Representation:	Coronial Advocate Assisting: Mr Durand Welsh
Non-publication order:	The Court has made orders for non-publication of certain evidence, pursuant to section 74 (1) (b) of the <i>Coroners Act</i> NSW 2009. Details of these orders can be found on the Registry file.

Findings:	<p>The identity of the deceased</p> <p>The person who died was Mr Edward Curic aka Grahovac.</p> <p>Date of Death</p> <p>Mr Curic died on 21 May 2022.</p> <p>Place of Death</p> <p>Mr Curic died at the Long Bay Correctional Complex, Matraville, New South Wales.</p> <p>Cause of death</p> <p>The cause of Mr Curic's death was due to diabetes mellitus and the consequences thereof.</p> <p>Manner of Death</p> <p>The manner of Mr Curic's death was due to natural causes whilst in lawful custody</p>
Recommendations:	N/A

Introduction

- 1 This inquest concerns the death of Mr Edward Curic, who was also known as Mr Edward Grahovac.
- 2 Mr Curic was born on 2 September 1972 at Sydney. He died on 21 May 2022 at Long Bay Correctional Complex, Matraville, in the state of New South Wales (**NSW**) at the age of 49 years. At the time of his death, Mr Curic was in lawful custody, serving a sentence of imprisonment.
- 3 Mr Curic died from natural causes, specifically diabetes mellitus.
- 4 The identity of Mr Curic, together with the date, place, cause and manner of Mr Curic's death are not in dispute. This inquest is a mandatory inquest due to Mr Curic's death having occurred while he was lawfully incarcerated in a NSW prison.
- 5 Mr Curic was the much-loved son of Ms Nada Grahovac.
- 6 Ms Grahovac attended these proceedings and expressed her ongoing grief and sense of significant loss at her son's death.
- 7 I would like to express my sincere condolences to Ms Grahovac for her loss of her loving son. I hope that Mr Curic's memory has been honoured by the careful examination of the circumstances surrounding his death.

The role of the Coroner and the scope of the inquest

- 8 A coroner is required to investigate all reportable deaths and to make findings as to the person's identity; as well as when and how the person died. A coroner is also required to identify the manner and cause of the person's death. In addition, a coroner may make recommendations, based on the evidence adduced during the inquest, which may improve public health and safety.
- 9 A person can be detained in lawful custody either as a result of the refusal of bail pending the determination of alleged criminal charges, or as a sentenced prisoner after conviction.
- 10 In circumstances where Mr Curic's death occurred whilst he was in lawful custody, an inquest is mandatory pursuant to sections 23 and 27 of the *Coroner's Act 2009* ("*the Act*"). Parliament recognised the importance of conducting a mandatory inquest into the death of an inmate who has been

deprived of their liberty. A person in custody is necessarily reliant on the State, and the facility in which they are incarcerated, to provide an adequate level of care during their incarceration. A mandatory review of the circumstances of Mr Curic's death is an important safeguard for persons incarcerated in New South Wales.

- 11 During these proceedings, a brief of evidence containing statements, interviews, photographs and other documentation, was tendered in court and admitted into evidence. In addition, oral evidence was received from the officer in charge of the investigation, Detective Senior Constable Christopher Radizio.
- 12 All the material placed before the Court has been thoroughly reviewed and considered. I have been greatly assisted by the oral submissions prepared by the coronial advocate assisting, Mr Durand Welsh. I was also assisted by Ms Karissa Mackay, Coronial Advocate who prepared the matter and liaised with various parties. At times, I have embraced their descriptions in these findings.
- 13 A Non-Publication Order (**NPO**) has been made pursuant to section 74 (1) (b) of the Coroners Act NSW 2009, relating to material contained in the brief of evidence which was tendered in these proceedings. A copy of the Order is annexed to these Findings and available in the Court Registry.

A Brief Overview of Mr Curic's Life

- 14 Mr Curic was born in Sydney on 2 September 1972 to his parents Nada Grahovac and Milan Curic. His parents acknowledged a proud Serbian heritage.
- 15 Mr Curic's parents separated when he was young and his mother raised him as a single parent in Sydney's Waterloo area. He had no contact with his father for most of his life.
- 16 Mr Curic and his mother travelled to Serbia when he was six years of age and stayed in Serbia for approximately one year before returning to Australia.
- 17 Mr Curic attended both primary and secondary school in Waterloo, before moving with his mother to the St Marys area. It was reported that a close childhood friend died when they were at school, and that the friend's death had a profound impact on Mr Curic.
- 18 Mr Curic was involved in playing sport until he was about 15 years of age.
- 19 He studied for trade certification in both mechanics and as a fitter and turner, however, he did not obtain final certification.

- 20 Mr Curic was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus when he was about twenty years of age. As the condition progressed, he underwent surgery for the removal of the toes on his left foot, as well as the above knee amputation of his right leg. He required the assistance of both a wheelchair and crutches for mobility for the remainder of his life. Mr Curic had a history of falls, related to these amputations, although it would appear from the available medical histories that these did not result in any significant injuries.
- 21 Medical records indicate that he had been diagnosed with Fournier's gangrene with recurrence of diabetic ketoacidosis in September 2021.
- 22 Mr Curic was also diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and an enlarged prostate in 2022.

Background

- 23 Mr Curic had an extensive criminal history, commencing when he was a young person in 1987. He received numerous Control Orders whilst he was a juvenile.
- 24 Mr Curic was first sentenced to a period of imprisonment as an adult in 1993.
- 25 On 9 March 2022, Mr Curic was sentenced to a period of imprisonment of 18 months with a 9-month non-parole period. He was initially housed at the Amber Laurel Correctional Centre.
- 26 Mr Curic's Justice Health records confirm that he had multiple comorbidities which required regular monitoring and management.
- 27 On 17 March 2022, Mr Curic was admitted to the Westmead Hospital for the management of chronic foot ulceration and his poorly controlled diabetes. On 21 March 2022, he underwent surgery for the treatment of his feet.
- 28 Mr Curic had a history of non-compliance regarding his prescribed insulin injections to manage his diabetes. During his admission to Westmead Hospital, he refused to allow the administration of his prescribed insulin.
- 29 On 2 May 2022, Mr Curic complained to medical staff at Parklea Correctional Centre that he was feeling unwell with ongoing stomach pain for the last three months. On investigation, a lump was located on his right side which appeared to be distended. He was transferred to Blacktown Hospital on 4 May 2022, due to having returned a positive test result for COVID-19, which required him to be isolated. An abdominal CT was performed and revealed the presence of

metastatic mesenteric cancer and pancreatic ascites. He was advised that his life expectancy was in the order of six months.

- 30 On 18 May 2022, Mr Curic was transferred to the Medical Sub Acute Unit within Long Bay Correctional Centre, for palliative care with a pain management plan. He was placed in a “one-out cell” meaning that he was the sole occupant of that cell.

Events on 20 – 21 May 2022

- 31 At 2.16pm on 20 May 2022, Mr Curic was observed moving around the Medical Sub Acute Unit in his wheelchair. He was seen to enter his cell prior to the Unit lock down at 2.19pm.
- 32 At 11.45pm on 20 May 2022, and again at 4.15am on 21 May 2022, Justice Health Nursing staff and Corrections Officers entered Mr Curic’s cell to administer his prescribed medications. On each occasion, Mr Curic provided verbal responses to staff.
- 33 At 6am on 21 May 2022, a headcount was conducted by Corrections staff and Mr Curic was observed to be in his bed, with a blanket covering him. Officers observed movement from Mr Curic and were satisfied he was alive.
- 34 At 7.22am, Mr Curic was located face down in the bathroom area of his cell, between the sink and the toilet bowl. Mr Curic’s wheelchair was 20 cm away from him. Correction Officers stated that Mr Curic appeared to have sustained an injury to his left eyebrow and was unresponsive. Staff immediately moved Mr Curic to the middle of the cell and commenced CPR. A defibrillator and a breathing bag were also employed; however, Mr Curic could not be revived. He was declared life extinct at 7.44am

Cause of Death

- 35 On 25 May 2022, the forensic pathologist, Dr Rianie Van Vuuren performed an external autopsy examination of Mr Curic.

- 36 Dr Van Vuuren noted that postmortem imaging showed minor coronary artery calcification, as well as liver lesions and ascites. Dr Van Vuuren also noted bruising and two lacerations to his right upper eyebrow.
- 37 The toxicological examination showed “no alcohol in the blood. Methadone was present in a level overlapping non-toxic to toxic, but tolerance should be considered. Metoclopramide, mirtazapine, morphine and its metabolite, and pregabalin were present in non-toxic levels”.
- 38 Dr Van Vuuren was of the opinion that Mr Curic’s death was due to natural causes and that his cause of death could be accurately described as being due to “Diabetes Mellitus and the Consequences thereof.”

Considerations

- 39 Mr Curic had a long and significant medical history. He had been resistant to medical interventions at numerous times and was often non-compliant with his prescribed medications.
- 40 Due to Mr Curic’s amputations, he was also known to have a risk of falls.
- 41 The medical records indicate that Mr Curic received appropriate medical treatment during the time of his incarceration in 2022. He appeared to have been reviewed by both Justice Health staff, as well as hospital staff at Westmead and Blacktown Hospitals during 2022.
- 42 The Officer in Charge of the investigation was of the opinion that the injury to Mr Curic’s head was consistent with him falling and hitting his head on the bathroom sink as he manoeuvred from his wheelchair to the toilet. I am satisfied that his head injury was superficial and did not contribute to his death.

Recommendations

- 43 There are no Recommendations regarding the care and treatment of Mr Curic whilst in custody during 2022.

Conclusions

- 44 Mr Curic had a lengthy and significant medical history.
- 45 I am satisfied that Mr Curic was lawfully in custody at the time of his death.
- 46 I am also satisfied that the cause of Mr Curic's death was due to natural events.
- 47 I again note the significant sense of loss and grief that Mr Curic's mother has experienced since his death. I again wish to extend my condolences to her.

Closing Observations

- 48 Before turning to the findings that I am required to make, I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Ms Karissa McKay and Mr Durand Welsh for their significant assistance, commitment, and preparation of this case.
- 49 I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Officer in Charge of this investigation, Detective Senior Constable Christopher Radizio for his assistance and commitment.

Findings pursuant to section 81(1) of the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW)

- 50 I make the following findings pursuant to section 81 (1) of the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW):

Findings

The identity of the deceased

- 51 The person who died was Mr Edward Curic, also known as Mr Edward Grahovac.

Date of Death

52 Mr Curic died on 21 May 2022.

Place of Death

53 Mr Curic died at Long Bay Correctional Centre, Matraville.

Cause of death

54 The cause of Mr Curic's death was Diabetes Mellitus and the consequences thereof.

Manner of Death

55 The manner of Mr Curic's death was Natural Causes whilst in lawful custody.

56 I now close this inquest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Baptie', written in a cursive style.

Judge Joan Baptie

Deputy State Coroner

20 May 2026