

SOUTH



AUSTRALIA

FINDING OF INQUEST

An Inquest taken on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen at Adelaide in the State of South Australia, on the 12th and 22nd days of September, 2000, before Wayne Cromwell Chivell, a Coroner for the said State, concerning the death of Olga Marie Wurst.

I, the said Coroner, do find that Olga Marie Wurst, aged 81 years, late of Glenside Hospital, Fullarton, died at Glenside Hospital on the 24th day of May, 2000 as a result of respiratory arrest caused by bronchopneumonia contributed to by non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. I find that the circumstances of death were as follows:-

1. **Reason for inquest**

1.1 On 19 January 2000 the Guardianship Board of South Australia made an order detaining Olga Marie Wurst in Glenside Hospital for the period up to and including 19 January 2001 pursuant to Section 13 of the Mental Health Act 1993. Accordingly, at the time of her death Mrs. Wurst was "detained in custody pursuant to an Act or law of the State" within the meaning of Section 12(1)(da) of the Coroners Act, and an inquest was therefore mandatory pursuant to Section 14(1a) of the said Act.

2. **Background**

2.1 Mrs. Wurst was admitted to Glenside Hospital on 12 November 1999. She had been diagnosed with dementia and with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

2.2 On 3 May 2000 Mrs. Wurst was transferred to Acacia Ward, as a detained patient.

2.3 On 21 May they noted that Mrs. Wurst had been suffering flu-like symptoms for several days, and was confined to bed. On 22 May 2000 it was thought that she had developed bronchopneumonia as she was pale, drowsy and her pulse was raised.

2.4 On 23 May 2000 Mrs. Wurst's condition deteriorated during the night, and she was given Cephalexin, an antibiotic.

2.5 On 24 May 2000 it was noted that Mrs. Wurst's conscious state deteriorated gradually during the afternoon. At about 3.50p.m. her respirations ceased.

2.6 At about 5.40p.m. Dr. Stephanie Cooper attended at Glenside Hospital, examined Mrs. Wurst, and declared her life to be extinct.

3. **Cause of death**

3.1 Dr. Cooper gave the opinion that the cause of Mrs. Wurst's death was bronchopneumonia contributed to by non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. I accept Dr. Cooper's opinion, and find accordingly.

3.2 On the basis of Dr. Cooper's opinion, I find that the cause of Mrs. Wurst's death was unrelated to her detention at Glenside Hospital.

3.3 As a death in custody, Mrs. Wurst's death was investigated by Constables McCarthy and Pahl from Norwood Patrols. The investigation has revealed no ground for concern about the quality of the treatment given to Mrs. Wurst during her period in custody.

4. **Recommendations**

4.1 There are no recommendations pursuant to Section 25(2) of the Coroners Act.

Key Words: death in custody

In witness whereof the said Coroner has hereunto set and subscribed his hand and

Seal the 22nd day of September, 2000.

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Coroner