



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.  
BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY  
BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY FOUNDATION  
SUPPORTING THE BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

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January 31, 2014

The Honourable Peter Gordon MacKay  
Department of Justice Canada  
284 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0H8

Dear Minister MacKay,

The BC Schizophrenia Society is currently in the process of reviewing recommendations relating to mental illness made by the BC Coroners Service. As an organization dedicated to supporting families coping with mental illness and its devastating effects, the BC Schizophrenia Society has a keen interest in recommendations that can improve responses to mental illness within the health and justice systems.

I am writing to inquire how the Department of Justice has responded to the recommendation noted below:

Inquest held at the Coroners Court in Burnaby, BC March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 into the death of Duncan Leslie Roy Smears (File No. 2011:0278:0202). The full verdict can be found here:

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/coroners/schedule/archive/2013/index.htm>

**Recommendation:**

That legislation be enacted to allow individuals identified as addicted to illegal drugs or suffering specified mental illnesses be detained for treatment in a treatment centre.

*Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that the brain chemistry of individuals dependent upon drugs such as methamphetamine is altered by chronic use. They were advised that the brain can take as long as five months to return to its normal dopamine levels and that during this period they are often unable to abstain from use on their own due to the way the neurotransmitter changes affect their drive to obtain and use the drug.*

I appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to receiving a response by February 28, 2014.

Sincerely,

Dave Halikowski  
BC Schizophrenia Society Chair