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BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY  
BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY FOUNDATION  
SUPPORTING THE BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

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January 31, 2014

Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens  
RCMP "E" Division  
14200 Green Timbers Way  
Surrey, BC V3T 6P3

Dear Mr. Callens,

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 RCMP "E" Division has responded to the recommendations noted below:

Inquest held at the Coroners Court in Burnaby, BC April 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 into the death of Matthew John Wilcox (File No. 2010:0270:0002)

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/coroners/schedule/archive/2012/docs/verdict-wilcox-2012-04-04.pdf>

**Recommendation:**

That the current 'Operation Skills Training Program' for RCMP officers be expanded to include Crisis Intervention and De-escalation training techniques when dealing with persons who are mentally ill. Such training techniques should be reviewed on a regular basis.

*Coroner's Comments: The jury heard from one police officer that there is no specific training offered on how to deal with mentally ill persons, with the exception of training provided on Mental Health Act apprehensions and Excited Delirium. The jury heard from another officer that de-escalation techniques were not part of training given at RCMP Depot.*

**Recommendation:**

That liaison teams comprised of a police officer and a mental health professional be available at all times to respond to calls involving a

mentally ill individual to assist in de-escalating the situation, and providing mental health assessment and assistance.

**Recommendation:**

That when an individual is arrested by police and is brought to hospital and admitted, that all efforts are made to accommodate family visitation as soon as possible.

**Recommendation:**

That family members be promptly informed when a person in custody is admitted to hospital.

**Recommendation:**

That family members be informed when an individual is released from custody while in hospital.

Inquest held at the Supreme Court in Duncan, BC January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 into the death of Derek Wayne Welton (File No. 2009:0178:0030)

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/coroners/schedule/archive/2011/docs/verdict-welton-file-2009-0178-0030.pdf>

**Recommendation:**

We recommend the RCMP review their training strategies in dealing with mental health situations. This review should include the use of available psychiatric resources such as B.C. Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission. These resources are to be accessed when required at an incident.

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