



Royal Court of Jersey
Viscount's Department

11 March 2026

Deputy T. Binet
Minister for Health and Social Services
Sent by email

Dear Deputy Binet

Inquest: Elaine Janet McKenna- Report to prevent future deaths

On 21 January 2026, I concluded the inquest into the death of 73-year-old Elaine McKenna. Elaine McKenna sadly died due to complications of immunotherapy for an unusual and aggressive rectal carcinoma. I enclose a copy of the inquest finding.

Elaine McKenna initially consulted her General Practitioner on 10 February 2025 with symptoms suspicious for bowel cancer and was referred for a colonoscopy following a positive faecal immunochemical test (a screening test used to detect the presence of blood in stool samples), the result of which was received by the GP on 5 March 2025.

Despite Elaine McKenna presenting with symptoms of bowel cancer (passing blood-stained mucus per rectum since January 2025) and a positive faecal immunochemical test, she was not offered a colonoscopy until 24 April 2025.

Elaine McKenna was admitted via the Emergency Department on 22 March 2025, due to a deterioration in her condition. During the inquest, Professor William Roche, Emeritus Professor of Pathology, expressed concern at the scheduling of the colonoscopy, given her symptoms and stated that earlier investigation would have been prudent.

Coroner's legal powers and public interest

One of the grounds of public interest which the coroner's inquest should serve is to draw attention to the existence of circumstances which, if left unremedied, might lead to further deaths. To that end, Rule 12 of the Inquest and Post-mortem Examinations (Jersey) Law 1995, permits me to report matters to the relevant person or authority with a view to preventing the recurrence of fatalities like that in question at the inquest.

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Accordingly, at the conclusion of Mrs McKenna's inquest, I announced that I would be writing a report to prevent future deaths. Given the issue is regarding the timing of investigations in suspected cancer, I believe you, as Minister for Health, are best placed to address this and have the power to act

Coroner's concerns and recommendations

The medical expert, Professor William Roche expressed concern about the delay following referral of a patient with suspected cancer and the scheduled diagnostic procedure. The development of a rapid referral process for suspected cancer may prevent future deaths.

In the NHS, urgent suspected cancer referrals (previously called 'two-week wait referrals') provide a fast-track pathway where a GP or specialist can refer for urgent tests. The aim is to have the results of these tests within 28 days.

Coroner's concerns

During the inquest the evidence revealed matters giving rise to concern. In my opinion there is a risk that future deaths could occur unless action is taken. In these circumstances it is my duty to report to you.

The MATTERS OF CONCERN are as follows. –

- (1) No rapid access pathway for investigations for suspected cancer
- (2) Delay in conducting investigations for suspected cancer
- (3) Delay in diagnosis and treatment for cancer which may impact prognosis

ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN

In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe you have the power to take such action.

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Minister for Health and Social Services

Acknowledgement of this letter would be appreciated.
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deryn Evans', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Deryn Evans
Assistant Coroner

cc. Mr Simon West, Medical Director, Jersey General Hospital