

Interim Chief of Police Jim Ramer
Toronto Police Service

Re Regis Korchinski-Paquet Incident and Epilepsy

August 27, 2020

Dear Chief Ramer,

We have reviewed the Special Investigations Unit report on the death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet, particularly for what, if any, role epilepsy may have played in the tragic incident. A key observation we have noted in the report is the confusion amongst officers on the scene, as well as emergency dispatchers, about the relationship between epilepsy and mental health. We believe this confusion only highlights the need for a greater level of training and knowledge on the part of first responders about epilepsy in general, and how it relates to mental health in particular.

The relationship between epilepsy and mental health is complex but understandable. This relationship can include:

- certain types of seizures or post-ictal states that can be mistaken for mental health issues or intoxication;
- post-ictal psychosis which, while rare, is a mental health issue directly connected to seizures themselves; and
- people with epilepsy, particularly people who do not have good seizure control, being at significantly increased risk of mental health issues including depression and suicide.

We have two key recommendations that we must emphasize about further actions the Toronto Police Service must take to support the nearly 1-in-100 people in Toronto living with epilepsy:

- 1) Including epilepsy experts, particularly those who can speak to the interaction between epilepsy and mental health, as part of your Section 11 review of this case and the broader review of mental health related responses as mandated by the Police Services Board.
- 2) Making immediate use of existing epilepsy training tools, including the training module for first responders created by Epilepsy Ontario and Epilepsy Ottawa already available on the Canadian Police Knowledge Network.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues in more detail. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require more information.

Sincerely,



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