Verdict of Coroner’s Jury
Office of the Chief Coroner
The Coroners Act – Province of Ontario

Surname: Coffey
Given names: Christopher
Aged: 46

Held at: Walkerton, Ontario
From the: 1st of December 2014
To the: 5th of December 2014
By: Dr. Thomas Wilson, Coroner for Ontario
having been duly sworn/affirmed, have inquired into and determined the following:

Name of Deceased: Christopher John Coffey
Date and Time of Death: June 21, 2013 at 23:54 hours
Place of Death: Grey-Bruce Health Services, Southampton Site, Southampton, Ontario
Cause of Death: Sudden death associated with Excited Delirium.
By what means: Natural

This verdict was received on the 5th day of December, 2014
Coroner’s Name: Dr. Thomas Wilson
(original signed by Coroner)

We, the jury, wish to make the following recommendations:

Inquest into the death of:
Christopher John Coffey
Jury Recommendations

1. It is recommended that subject to manufacturers’ instructions, Saugeen Shores Police Service cruisers be equipped with an automatic external defibrillator (AED) and oropharyngeal airways (OPA) and that Saugeen Shores Police Service take appropriate measures to ensure that Officers are trained in procedures related to the proper usage and maintenance of the AED and the OPA.

2. It is recommended that local emergency services liaise with local community resources available to persons with mental health disorders to increase awareness of and increase accessibility to those local resources.

3. It is recommended that the Saugeen Shores Police Service and the Corporation of the County of Bruce make representations to the Owen Sound Dispatch Services, that they consider reviewing dispatcher training with respect to dispatch calls that may exhibit a potential mental health crisis.

4. It is recommended that the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services conduct a review of police training protocols and use of force options to access whether training for officers to use conducted energy weapons (CEW) in circumstances where individuals are intensely resisting arrest, specifically those exhibiting signs of excited delirium, may be a safer and more effective way of immobilizing such individuals.

5. It is recommended that the decision makers of the Saugeen Shores Police Force and Bruce County Emergency Medical Services consider automatic dispatch of Emergency Medical Services to a police 10-78 code, being “Officer requires assistance”, and other more urgent codes of a similar nature.

6. It is recommended that the Saugeen Shores Police Service make representations to the Owen Sound Dispatch Service to review the 911 calls in relation to this incidence for quality assurance purposes.

7. It is recommended that Saugeen Shores Police Service consider training all officers on the use of conducted energy weapons (CEW) and extend the use of CEWs to all trained officers.

8. It is recommended that Saugeen Shores Police Service consider the review of this incident with their staff stressing the importance of ensuring the proper use of personal protective equipment.