

Man found dead at Howard Springs quarantine facility after downing bottle of vodka

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Independent Staff



A 77-year-old man who was quarantining at Howard Springs has died, with friends claiming a “breach of duty of care” at the facility, after the British man was last seen polishing off a bottle of vodka at the dry facility.

Lucas Malasti, who arrived at the facility three days ago onboard a repatriation flight from Frankfurt, said the man had come from the UK to see his son in Australia, but had somehow managed to sneak in a bottle of vodka which he proceeded to drink in one sitting on Saturday night.

“He sat across from us and consumed the whole bottle of vodka because he was happy to be here,” Mr Malasti said.

“[Staff] saw him intoxicated and put him to bed. The next morning he’s stone dead and the room stinks like alcohol.

“We have a massive breach of duty of care at this facility.

“The other guys are all extremely traumatised by this event. We don’t know how to contact his son.”

NT Police did not issue a statement about the man’s death.

However, Police Commissioner and Territory Controller Jamie Chalker confirmed at Monday’s COVID-19 press conference that a 77-year-old man from an international repatriation flight had died at the Howard Springs quarantine facility over the weekend.

He did not give information as to where the man originated or how long he had been at the quarantine facility.

“He was an international repat. Obviously, he was a 77-year-old individual,” Mr Chalker said.

“We’re just looking at whether they had any existing other issues but certainly the initial advice is not indicating that it was a death relating to COVID.”

It remains unclear if police have opened an investigation into the death.

Some citizens have flagged concerns on the leniency of baggage checks at the Howard Springs quarantine facility and the failure of the NT Government to impose stricter measures at the facility.

Mr Malasti said staff have refused to give him the medication he needs to deal with an ongoing PTSD condition.

“We’ve been nothing but neglected here since we arrived,” he said.

Mr Chalker and police media ignored the NT Independent’s questions about the man’s death. The NT Government also did not respond to questions.

