

REMEMBER OMID MASOUMALI



A VICTIM OF SYSTEMIC NEGLECT

Omid was an Iranian refugee who died after setting himself on fire at the Nauru detention centre in April 2016. The coronial inquest into his death is happening today and the Refugee Action Collective are here to bring attention to the circumstances surrounding his tragic death.

Omid came to Australia seeking asylum in 2013 but was denied this right and was instead detained without charge on Nauru. Eventually his claim was processed on Nauru and he was found to be a refugee but he was never resettled. According to his wife, this meant they were still "feeling like prisoners". A Commonwealth psychiatrist told the inquest that many refugees had feelings of abandonment and despair and many suffered from major depression and PTSD.

Peter Dutton repeatedly defended the standard of healthcare on Nauru saying it was better than "many hospitals in regional Australia". But according to Omid's wife, after the incident he was without doctors' care for two hours at the medical facility and lay in agony for a further eight hours before morphine was administered. It took the Australian government 31 hours to get him to a special burns unit. According to experts, if he had been treated at a major Australian hospital in a "timely fashion" he would have had a 90 to 95 percent chance of survival.

Multiple witnesses at the inquest have detailed unhygienic conditions, broken and antiquated equipment, and under-trained staff at the Nauru hospital. When the LifeFlight doctor, Dr Angus McDonnell, asked for soap, he was given dishwashing liquid. The inquest is now looking into Omid's mental health treatment. New evidence emerged showing he had made a request to see a psychologist prior to the day of his death.

Omid is one of thirteen asylum seekers to needlessly die because of Australia's brutal off-shore detention system. His death highlights the injustice of maintaining offshore detention as well as the indefinite detention in Australia of refugees transferred from Nauru and PNG. It's time to end their misery and set them free.



Join the Refugee Action Collective mailing list at www.rac-qld.org
For more information call Mark on 0439561196