



MEDIA RELEASE – SWSLHD and Dental Council – Dr Somaey

FINAL

Patients of Fairfield dentist advised of health risk

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) is advising patients who have undergone invasive dental procedures since 12 August 2016 carried out by Dr Sahar Somaey at her Fairfield dental practice to see their GP for testing for blood borne viruses.

Following a complaint to the Dental Council of NSW, a public health investigation was carried out at Somaey Dental Services, at Fairfield. Assessments in June and July 2017 by the Dental Council and NSW Health found evidence of poor cleaning and sterilisation of dental equipment used in the practice since January 2017, and no evidence of good infection control since 12 August 2016.

The Dental Council suspended Dr Somaey on 22 June 2017 from practising as a dentist in NSW and has referred the case onto the HCCC for investigation.

Somaey Dental Services was located within the Ware Street Medical and Dental Centre, Shop 3, 37-41 Ware Street, Fairfield.

No instances of patient infection arising from treatment at Dr Somaey Dental Services have been identified. However, depending on what procedures people had at the clinic, there is a low risk that they may have been exposed to hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV.

Dr Kate Alexander, Acting Director SWSLHD Public Health Unit recommends anyone who had an invasive procedure at Dr Somaey Dental Services between 12 August 2016 to 20 July 2017, should see their GP to discuss testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, as a precaution.

“The potential risk of infection applies to patients who underwent invasive procedures, such as those involving a needle or other instrument piercing the skin, gums or tooth pulp/root and other procedures where bleeding may have occurred,” Dr Alexander said.

“It’s important to note that the risk of transmission of a blood-borne virus to any individual patient in the dental setting is low.

“Patients who only had simple check-ups, an x-ray, or to get dentures should not be at risk but those with doubts or concerns should see their GP,” she said.

Hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV can remain undetected for years but effective treatments are now available to prevent long-term health effects and transmissions to other people.

Dr William O’Reilly, President of the Dental Council of NSW said that a recent audit of infection control compliance carried out by the Council revealed a high level of compliance among NSW dental practitioners.

“The overwhelming majority of dental practitioners who were audited by the Council demonstrated sound knowledge of infection control guidelines, procedures and obligations,” Dr William O’Reilly said.

The audit was part of a broader initiative by the Dental Council to assist the profession in understanding infection control guidelines and obligations

For more information

If you have any questions about the public health risk, please contact your local Public Health Unit through the state-wide number, on 1300 066 055.

Information on this may be found on the NSW Health website at:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/dental-practices.aspx>

Information about hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV infections can be found by following the links to a factsheet on each specific disease at the NSW Health

website: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/default.aspx>

This media release is also available in Arabic.