

GP Alert

21 August 2017

Infection control breaches in Fairfield dental practice operated by Dr Sahar Somaey

Key Points for GPs

1. Infection control breaches have been identified at Somaey Dental Services in the Ware Street Medical and Dental Centre, Shop 3, 37 Ware Street, Fairfield operated by Dr Sahar Somaey.
2. The risk of transmission of blood-borne viruses (hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV) to any individual patient is considered to be low
3. Patients who have had invasive procedures performed by Dr Somaey since 12 August 2016 have been advised to present to their GP for testing

- Breaches of infection control have been identified at the **Somaey Dental Services** (Ware Street Medical and Dental Centre, Shop 3, 37 Ware Street, Fairfield) operated by Dr Somaey, likely dating **from 12 August 2016**.
- The NSW Dental Council has suspended the registration of Dr Somaey.
- The NSW Health Blood Borne Viruses Advisory Panel have advised that there is a risk of blood borne virus transmission for individual patients who underwent invasive procedures at Dr Somaey's practice between 12 August 2016 and 20 July 2017.
- Invasive procedures are where a needle or other instrument pierces the skin, gums or tooth pulp/root, or where bleeding occurs. Patients who have had only non-invasive procedures such as simple removal of plaque without bleeding, routine examination, x-rays and placement of crowns are considered to be at negligible risk.
- To date, no cases of blood-borne virus infection have been identified that were associated with Dr Somaey's dental practice.
- Testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV has been recommended for patients who have had one or more invasive dental procedures since 12 August 2016.
- NSW Dental Council and South Western Sydney Local Health District jointly issued a media release on 21/08/2017 to notify patients of Dr Somaey of their risks and to seek advice from their doctor if they believe they may have had an invasive procedure.

Who should I test for blood-borne viruses?

- Patients who believe they may have had **at least one** invasive procedure at Dr Somaey's practice between 12 August 2016 and 20 July 2017 should be tested for blood borne viruses.
- Unless you and the patient are clear that they have had no invasive procedures, testing is warranted as a precaution.
- Some patients seeking testing may already have a blood borne virus infection from exposures unrelated to their dental treatment. Blood borne virus prevalence is higher amongst certain migrant populations. A single lifetime hepatitis B screening test is recommended for at-risk migrant populations; see <http://testingportal.ashm.org.au/hbv/indications-for-hbv-testing>

How should I test my patients and provide follow-up?

- For patients who believe they have had invasive dental procedures at Dr Somaey's practice during this time period, please arrange serology for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV.
- Provide reassurance to the patients that their risk of blood-borne virus acquisition through the dental practice is low and effective treatment is available should they test positive.
- If any of the dental patients test positive for one of these infections, please contact your local public health unit on 1300 066 055.

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