

Media Release

8 August, 2018

Patients of Haberfield dentist advised of health risk

Patients treated at the dental practice of Dr James Pok-Yan Ng in Haberfield are being asked to visit their GP to be tested for blood-borne viruses following his suspension from practice.

The Health Care Complaints Commission alerted the Dental Council of NSW to possible poor hygiene practices at the premises and a subsequent inspection confirmed health concerns.

The acting director of Sydney Local Health District's Public Health Unit, Dr Zeina Najjar, said no patients had been identified with blood-borne virus infections related to the practice, and the likely risk of infection was low.

"Precautionary testing for hepatitis B, C, and HIV is recommended for anyone who attended the clinic over the past 35 years, especially those who had invasive procedures," Dr Najjar said.

"This would have involved a needle or other instrument piercing the skin, gums or tooth root, or where bleeding may have occurred, but we recommend any patient of this practice sees their GP."

The president of the Dental Council of NSW, Dr Shane Fryer, said inspectors found cleaning and sterilisation practices in the Haberfield surgery breached the Dental Board of Australia's guidelines.

"The council carries out inspections of dental practices when a complaint is made which raises a possible concern about compliance with our infection control guidelines," Dr Fryer said.

"Overwhelmingly, the majority of dental practitioners comply with infection control guidelines, procedures and obligations but if anyone has concerns, we urge you to contact the HCCC or the Dental Council."

If you have questions about the public health risk, please contact hotline number **1800 610 344**.

Further information may be found at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/dental-practice-haberfield.aspx>

And: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets>.

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