

Media release

17 October 2016

Tips for dental patients

Today, the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) has launched its first ever video for patients to help make sure they are getting safe care from their dental practitioners.

Launched during International Infection Control Week (16 – 22 October), the video aims to:

- help patients know what infection prevention and control protocols to expect when visiting their dental practitioner
- encourage patients to ask their treating dental practitioner questions about infection prevention and control and how their treating dental practitioner can ensure that they meet their infection control obligations, and
- inform patients on what to do if they have a concern about their dental practitioner's infection control practices.

The Board considers investing in information for patients a powerful additional check on the infection control standards of dental practitioners in Australia.

What dental patients can do?

The Board strongly encourages dental patients to go to the Board's website at www.dentalboard.gov.au, to view the video produced for dental patients. The video gives dental patients seven easy to remember tips to consider whether their dental practitioner is following the correct infection control protocols.

The Board's tips encourage patients to ask:

1. Is your dental practitioner registered? Check the online national register of dental practitioners on the [Board's website](#) and make sure your dental practitioner is registered and meets national standards.
2. Does your dental surgery look clean and tidy?
3. Is your dental practitioner wearing appropriate clothing, gloves, a mask and glasses?
4. Does your dental practitioner have a sink in their surgery where they can wash their hands?
5. Does your dental practitioner work with an assistant?
6. Are the instruments used on you clean or new and disposable?
7. Are the instruments sterilised or does the dental practitioner have an autoclave (which is a machine used to sterilise instruments)?

It is important to note that the video was filmed in a simulated environment with actors and should not be used as a training material for professionals. The video is a resource intended for general public information.

What can dental patients do if they have any concerns about infection control and prevention?

It is usually best to resolve any problems with your dental practitioner if you can. If you still have serious concerns you can make a complaint to:

- AHPRA and the [Dental Board of Australia](#) on 1300 419 495.
- In New South Wales:
 - contact the NSW [Health Professional Councils Authority](#) on 1300 197 177 (if your query is about a medical practitioner or student in NSW, phone (02) 9879 2200), or
 - the NSW [Health Care Complaints Commission](#) on 1800 043 159 or (02) 9219 7444.
- In Queensland contact the [Office of the Health Ombudsman](#) on 133 OHO (133 646).

Practitioners' responsibility

The Board expects all dental practitioners to practise in a way that maintains and enhances public health and safety by ensuring that the risk of the spread of infection is prevented or minimised.

Dental practitioners are reminded to practise in accordance with the Board's *Guidelines on infection control* and to refer to [resources](#) developed by the Board to ensure that they meet the infection control obligations.

The Board's Guidelines and additional resources are available on the [Board's website](#).

For more information

- Access the video or go to [AHPRA YouTube channel](#).
- Go to www.dentalboard.gov.au
- For online enquiries, go to www.ahpra.gov.au/enquiry.
- For registration enquiries, dial 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers).
- For media enquiries, dial (03) 8708 9200.