

Infection control breaches at Medsound Diagnostic Imaging Information for General Practitioners

Key points

1. Infection control breaches have been identified at a diagnostic imaging practice in Hornsby
2. Procedures may have been performed by an unregistered practitioner
3. Patients who have had certain procedures should be screened for blood borne viruses

Background

- The Healthcare Complaints Commission (HCCC) and Northern Sydney Local Health District Public Health Unit (PHU) investigated this practice following a patient complaint.
- The investigation found that an unregistered person was performing ultrasound procedures and writing reports, and that there were unsatisfactory infection control procedures.
- The HCCC is pursuing its specific areas of concern, including the risks of potential misdiagnosis.
- NSW Health has written to patients and their referring doctors, alerting them to the potential for blood borne virus infection.
- Records may have been incomplete or inaccurate, so it has not been possible to clearly identify which practitioner at the practice performed procedures.

Issues

- There is potential for misdiagnosis on imaging, as an unregistered person performed procedures.
- There is potential for patient-to-patient spread of blood borne viruses and other infections, due to poor infection control practices.

What should I do?

- If your patient had a procedure at Medsound between 31 January 2017 and 20 November 2020, please check if their procedure needs to be repeated.
- If your patient had any of the following procedures, please discuss screening for blood borne viruses (hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV):
 - Transvaginal/transrectal ultrasound
 - Orbital/periorbital ultrasound
 - Ultrasound of non-intact skin
 - Procedures involving injections or surgical procedures
- Please make an assessment regarding whether your patient requires screening for other infections, dependent on the procedure they had.

Further information:

- Additional information from NSW Health can be found at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/diagnostic-imaging-medsound.aspx>
- Additional information from the HCCC can be found at: <https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/decisions-orders/public-statements-and-warnings/public-warning-under-s94a-of-the-health-care-complaints-act-ultrasound-services-provided-by-ms-li-shen-and-medsound-hornsby>

Yours sincerely

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