

Decision of the Dental Board of Australia

Performance and Professional Standards Panel

Jurisdiction: Victoria

Date of hearing and decision: 30 January 2012

Classification of Notification:

Communication – failed to communicate openly, honestly and effectively

Clinical care – inadequate or inappropriate procedure

A patient underwent a dental implant procedure and complained that a facial nerve was damaged in the process.

Allegations

The allegations against the practitioner were that he had failed to inform his patient that a complication had occurred during the placement of an implant. The complication required the removal of the original implant and its replacement with a wider diameter implant. It was alleged that the practitioner did not adequately assess the volume of bone in the pre-operative phase of the implant treatment.

Finding

The Panel found that while the pre-implant investigations carried out for the patient were appropriate, the practitioner did not discuss with the patient the need to remove the first implant and replace it with a wider implant, or did not give the patient a choice to either continue with the procedure or abort it.

As a result, the Panel concluded that the first allegation was made out because the practitioner behaved in an unsatisfactory way. It found the second allegation was not made out and, as such, there was no case to answer.

On the first allegation, the Panel found the practitioner behaved in a way that constituted unsatisfactory professional performance in that he failed to inform his patient at the time of the procedure that a complication had occurred during the placement of the implant that required the removal of the original implant and its replacement with another implant.

Determination

The Panel determined to caution the practitioner.