

Toxic Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania

Media Release

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Toxics Group Rejects Toxicology Reports on Poisoned Rosebery Residents

The Toxics Heavy Metals Taskforce Tasmania have today rejected the findings in reports from Professor Frank Daly and Professor George Braitberg. The reports were commissioned by the Department of Health to assess the heavy metal poisoning diagnosis by Dr Andreas Ernst on 10 people from Rosebery.

Spokesperson for the Taskforce Kay Seltitzas today said:

“Professors Frank Daly and George Braitberg based their assessments on ten patients from information provided by the DHHS from previous investigations, medical reports, data, test results and files. The conclusions in their reports based on the information provided show numerous errors of fact and incorrect assumptions:

- Conclusions drawn were made from incomplete, flawed and deficient DHHS and EPA investigations.
- Assumptions on possible diagnosis were made without patient consultations or examinations.
- Assumptions on possible diagnosis were made without access to up to date medication lists, accurate medical reports, documentation, correct data and specialist/ diagnostic test results
- Incorrect attribution and analysis of data
- Conflicting findings between Professor Daly's and Professor Braitbergs' reports.

“This, in our opinion has led to deficient assessments of Dr Ernst's diagnosis of the ten patients. In addition the lack of essential patient consultations and examinations has hindered the establishment of a current and objective toxicological assessment of patients' symptoms.

Most importantly, some of the people who have been diagnosed with heavy metal poisoning, whether or not their diagnosis has been assessed on paper by Profs Daly and Braitberg, have developed further serious medical complications that are symptomatic of heavy metal poisoning.

Professor Daly and Braitbergs' Reports on 10 patients diagnosed with heavy metal poisoning.

EXAMPLES OF DEFICIENCIES:

PATIENT A - Serious omissions of numerous recent test results and a medications list that includes drugs never taken by patient A.

PATIENT B - Patient A's cadmium results used for patient B in one report and no recent specialist test results included.

PATIENT C - Possible diagnosis of symptoms incorrectly attributed to alcohol when patient C has not consumed alcohol for over 40 years.

PATIENT D - Omitted patient D's high urinary nickel level and other high levels of metals.

PATIENT E - Assumptions on medications causing symptoms in this patient whereas patient E does not use any medications.

PATIENT F - No information on laboratory data or blood tests provided for patient F and yet assumptions made on possible drug related causes of symptoms.

PATIENT G - Assumptions on urinary arsenic levels being attributed to consuming fish whereas this patient does not eat any fish. Recently patient G had x-rays which found 18 lumps in various parts of the body and he is awaiting surgery – these symptoms were not assessed.

PATIENT H - Very little documentation provided by the DHHS for patient H and no mention is made of infant son's levels of heavy metals especially thallium. Also patient H has developed further medical complications this year and these were not assessed.

In his report Professor Braitberg quoted from Prof. Priestley's report "I had explained to the residents that my role was not to provide any clinical analysis or comment on their individual health problems. This is clearly a matter which needs to be resolved by consultation with qualified medical practitioners..." Professors Daly and Braitberg conducted no examinations, made no direct contact with those patients subject to their investigation or contacted their General Practitioners.

We will continue to stand by the diagnosis of heavy metal poisoning by Dr Ernst, an eminent and highly regarded Tasmanian specialist and we believe that the final arbiter on the question of diagnosis will be determined through the courts in the legal action being undertaken by Slater and Gordon on behalf of people poisoned in Rosebery" said Ms Seltitzas.

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