

Claims of illegal cosmetic injections prompts city raid

Party over for Botox nurse

PREMISES believed to have been used for illegal Botox parties have been raided by police and health officials in Cairns.

The raid by officers from the Health Quality and Complaints Commission and police took place earlier this week.

It follows allegations of a registered nurse illegally administering cosmetic injections to people during Botox parties and at other times.

Commission chief executive officer Cheryl Herbert said the commission, in conjunction with the Queensland Nursing Council, was investigating allegations surrounding the administration of cosmetic injections in Cairns.

"As part of our investigation the HQCC executed a search warrant on a Cairns property this week," she said.

Ms Herbert said investigations

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were continuing and the officers had yet to determine how many people were involved.

She said the commission was acting on complaints to the QNC.

Members of the commission's investigations unit started investigating the complaints about three weeks ago.

"We will continue to gather and analyse evidence to inform our investigation," Ms Herbert said.

"This will determine whether there are any matters to be prosecuted by the QNC," she said.

The investigation was prompted after advertisements about cheap Botox treatments started appearing in *The Cairns Post*, offering prices of \$10 a unit and \$20 a collagen unit



Business injection: An advertisement in *The Cairns Post* classifieds.

with free consultations. After complaints to the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the advertisements were changed to read "cosmetic injections".

The last advertisements appeared

late last month. There were no answers to the numbers called yesterday by *The Weekend Post*.

A doctor, who asked not to be named, said he believed the nurse had hosted the parties to sell and administer the injections.

He said there were concerns how she had obtained the drug, what qualifications she had to administer the injections and under whose supervision.

The doctor said Botox could only be supplied to a doctor and could be administered by a qualified nurse, but under the supervision of a doctor.

"She either obtained it from a doctor or has bought it overseas and imported it, the latter of which I think has happened," he said.

The doctor said he had alerted authorities and *The Cairns Post* to the Botox advertisements.

He said under TGA guidelines it was not permitted to advertise Botox and hence the change of the wording of the advertisements.

The doctor said he spoke to Botox manufacturer Allergan which had no record of supplying the drug to the nurse.

"One of my patients has been to her, that's how we found out," he said.

"At least one consumer has had some adverse outcome from the treatment."

The doctor said one of his nurses had been interviewed by the an investigator.

"This treatment is safe but it needs to be given under the correct circumstances and under trained and medical supervision," he said.

▶ Anyone with concerns about the provision of cosmetic procedures should contact the HQCC on 1800 077 308.

Kind act helps family in need



Thanks: Lisa Ohnesorgen and her son Aiden Maddalena, 13 months, are grateful for help to cover medical expenses.

Pictures: TALIA LING



A WHITE knight with a motorcycle has come to the aid of a Cairns family mourning the loss of a partner and father, and also facing stiff bills to treat a boy's rare medical condition.

Lisa Ohnesorgen's partner died two months ago and says it is only the love for her 13-month-old boy Aiden Maddalena which keeps her going.

Aiden's father Andrew Maddalena died in country NSW in January after he was crushed under a road roller during a bitumen-spraying operation.

He was working away from Cairns to earn money for his son's medical bills.

Aiden is affected by Syndactyly, a genetic condition where fingers and toes are joined together. Ms Ohnesorgen has

had to place Aiden in child care and work to save to see a Brisbane specialist.

With no car and barely making enough to pay the household bills, Ms Ohnesorgen makes do with what little she has.

But her friends Leone Tidswell and Tiffany Girault read an article in *The Cairns Post* on March 8 about David "Prong" Trimble of Cairns Performance

Motorcycles, who was looking to donate cash from an event he was organising to a needy family.

Ms Ohnesorgen and Aiden's hardship inspired Mr Trimble to give the proceeds from the Ellis Beach Old Skool Motorcycle Show on March 28 to them.

"I take each day as a blessing," she said. "I feel very lucky to have great friends."

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