



**Department of Health**

Enquiries to: Dr Stephen Lambert  
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File Ref: CH011358

Dear Doctor

You may be aware of a coronial inquest that is currently underway into the death of an asplenic child due to overwhelming sepsis. I am writing to let you know what Queensland Health is doing to ensure best practice management of these patients and to ask for your assistance in this process.

1. Spleen Registry for Queenslanders

People living without a spleen, or with reduced spleen function, face a lifetime risk of contracting overwhelming post-splenectomy infections (OPSIs) from potentially life threatening invasive bacterial diseases. These include blood stream infections and meningitis – which are largely preventable through vaccination, the use of prophylactic antibiotics, and patient education.

Literature and registry data indicate that being on a spleen registry significantly decreases the risk of severe illness due to an OPSI. To reduce the risk for people living with these conditions, Queensland Health has engaged Spleen Australia to maintain a state-wide registry and provide a range of support services, free of charge, to eligible Queenslanders and their doctors.

**I encourage you to ask all your eligible patients to register with Spleen Australia.**

Registrations can be completed online at [www.spleen.org.au](http://www.spleen.org.au). Alternatively, a hard copy of the registration and consent form can be downloaded from the Spleen Australia website and faxed or posted.

2. Development of an Alert System

Queensland Health has generated an asplenia/splenectomy clinical alert within the Hospital Based Corporate Information System (HBCIS). The HBCIS alert is limited in its scope and covers only the facility in which it is uploaded. Queensland Health is working to progressively implement the alert into the Integrated Electronic Medical Record which is a state-wide system.

3. Development of a clinical guideline

Queensland Health is also working with Spleen Australia to develop a national clinical guideline for the management of paediatric patients post splenectomy. This document is being finalised and, once endorsed, will be available on the Spleen Australia website.

I encourage you to familiarise yourself with the information on the Queensland Health website <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/subsidies-support/services/spleen-registry/default.asp>. Should you require further information or **help completing registration** please contact the Spleen Australia team on 1800 SPLEEN (775336) or visit their website [www.spleen.org.au](http://www.spleen.org.au)

Yours sincerely

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