



Hidden River Health Challenge
Safer Alternatives to Mercury Amalgam in Dentistry (SafeAMER)
Laura Henze Russell, Founder and Principal **Let's Thrive!**

Join Us! End mercury's hidden river in our bodies, ourselves, environment, our futures

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec. 3, 2012

Contact: Laura Henze Russell 339-364-0701

Laurarussell2@comcast.net

RSVP in advance for admission to Town Meeting

Poisoned Mom asks Town to Learn, Reduce Mercury, Improve Health
-Sharon Town Meeting to Include Mercury Dental Amalgam Issues-

-This is a story that starts local, and goes big-

-Mon. Dec. 3, 2012, 7 pm, Sharon High School, 181 Pond Street, Sharon, MA-

Sharon, MA – November 30, 2012 - Are you aware of the health risks associated with dental amalgam? It is 50 percent mercury, a potent neurotoxin. It is now proven to emit toxic mercury vapors in the presence of heat and abrasion. It is now proven to be a factor or co-factor in a host of chronic, devastating, costly diseases across the age spectrum. *Yet the FDA has not yet acted upon the recommendations of its Scientific Advisory Panels in 2006 and 2010 to restrict its use.*

This topic hits all too close to home for Sharon resident Laura Henze Russell. Russell became ill in March of 2011, and grew increasingly sick over the next year while confounding a dozen specialists at Boston area hospitals and health practice groups who could not diagnose her. One year later, doctors realized that her sickness was due to the mercury used in her dental fillings. Russell suffered from chronic ailments such as fibromyalgia for nearly twenty years.

Determined to make a lasting impression on the community and prevent future illnesses, Russell founded *Hidden River Health Challenge* to address the river of mercury and other toxins in our bodies, brains and cells that is harming our health, and leading to skyrocketing health care costs.

“We need to educate the public on the risks of mercury poisoning from dental amalgam,” says Russell. I had no idea my fillings had mercury, or that it could degrade and vaporize, and cause a host of chronic health problems.” New research shows that people with certain gene types do not clear mercury well, and Russell suspects she has one of those gene types. Connecticut, Maine, Vermont and California, and the City of Philadelphia, require informed consent before use of mercury dental amalgam.

Russell first gave a presentation to the Sharon Board of Health in July 2012. Russell has attended conferences throughout the country and a number of Boston area forums, spoken with experts in the field and with national, state and local officials, read new research papers being published, and met with people whose health was impacted by mercury dental amalgam from across the Commonwealth and across the nation. Russell has also raised the issue at public and community events and with public officials and decision makers, and is working to file legislation in the upcoming 2013-2014 session.

“We need to educate the public, provide more options, and **break the FDA logjam on dental amalgam**,” says Russell. “The FDA’s own Scientific Advisory Panels in 2006 and 2010 raised major concerns about the health impacts of dental amalgam and the majority did not agree with the FDA’s findings of safety.

Dental amalgam has been banned in Denmark, Norway and Sweden after years of phasedown and study. International efforts at phasedown and ending its use are underway in the European Commission, U.N. Environment Programme, and an International Treaty is now underway. The World Health Organization has called for a phase down of its use based on the work of preeminent Swedish scientist Maths Berlin.

Russell will present three Articles at Sharon Town Meeting on December 3, 2012:



Hidden River Health Challenge
Safer Alternatives to Mercury Amalgam in Dentistry (SafeAMER)
Laura Henze Russell, Founder and Principal **Let's Thrive!**

Join Us! End mercury's hidden river in our bodies, ourselves, environment, our futures

Article 11. Resolution to encourage Town boards and residents, on a voluntary basis, to learn about the issues, risks and alternatives to mercury dental amalgam in the coming year; and to call upon the President of the United States to direct the FDA to follow the recommendations of its 2010 Scientific Advisory Panel to restrict amalgam use.

Article 12. By-Law providing for specific informed consent on the use of dental mercury amalgam in which patients get warnings similar to those required from manufacturers to dentists about risks of amalgam, and about risks of its removal and replacement without adequate safety equipment and precautions.

Article 13. Asks the Town and School Department, when they rebid dental plans, to request quotes on “cost neutral” plans that pay the same percentage toward all dental fillings, whether amalgam or alternatives, in all teeth, and offer such a plan as an option to employees.

“We phase mercury out of all other products, but the FDA gives it protected legal status in our teeth, which are the mouth to the brain and the lungs for toxic mercury vapor. It is harming people of all ages, stages and walks of life, devastating families and raising local, state and U.S. health care costs,” says Russell. “The FDA is holding our health hostage on this issue because it is inconvenient for the dental associations, who maintain its safety despite new evidence.”

There is breaking information on how mercury toxicity is especially damaging to people with certain gene types, a new piece of the puzzle. A new study led by James S. Woods reversed his earlier findings of amalgam safety in children from a large scale trial in Portugal, finding neurobehavioral deficits and kidney damage in boys of a certain gene type. A study by Thomas Duplinsky of Yale School of Medicine in October 2012 found significantly higher prescription use by dentists compared to matched controls for neurological, psychiatric, cardiovascular and respiratory disease.

The International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT) was founded in 1984 to scientifically address health and safety concerns about dental materials. IAOMT is at the forefront of research and education on biologic dentistry, working to continually examine and compile scientific research relating to the biocompatibility of oral/dental materials to ensure more informed use of these materials in clinical practice. IAOMT has 12 member dentists in Massachusetts.

IAOMT has taken the lead on petitions for reconsideration of the FDA's final ruling to classify amalgam as Class II based on scientific evidence. The FDA's 2009 Class II ruling for amalgam requires special labeling controls for dentists, but no warnings or restrictions for patients. As a result, it is still the standard of care for U.S. dental insurance plans, regardless of gene type and toxicity reaction by patients. This rule may be used to argue that further restrictions on labeling are illegal based on federal preemption, so IAOMT and others are appealing it through administrative and regulatory avenues and the courts.

As Russell continues to gain support in her quest for a healthier future for all, the community becomes more aware of this ‘hidden river’ of mercury in our in our bodies, brains and cells. Hidden River Health Challenge is a social innovation enterprise combining the best of grassroots and cloud engagement with one challenge model to end mercury amalgam dental poisoning in US.

To learn more about the issue, see <http://www.oceanriver.org/hiddenriver.php>, www.iaomt.org, www.mercuryexposure.org, www.toxicteeth.org. and additional links listed on these sites.

Next: Russell will testify at December 3rd EOHHS Budget Hearing at State House, Dec. 10th 10-2 pm.

###