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NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TARGETS SCOTTISH HAIR SALONS

Almost all hair salons surveyed in Scotland as part of a nationwide safety campaign are failing to protect customers from potential allergic reactions to hair dyes.

National consumer safety group APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) surveyed salons in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee to find how many require clients to undergo a skin allergy test before a colour treatment.

Only five per cent of salons surveyed in Scotland required a skin test.

APIL is calling on the Government to regulate the hairdressing industry, so that hairdressers are legally obliged to be properly qualified, and made to follow compulsory, high standards of practice.

Denise Kitchener, chief executive of APIL, said: "While there are some excellent hairdressers, we are really concerned that anyone can pick up a pair of scissors and set up a salon. This is putting consumers at risk, and we know from research among our members that hundreds of people have been injured in the past twelve months alone."

Skin testing for allergies involves administering a small amount of hair dye, or treatment chemical, to the skin at least 24 hours before the appointment.

None of the salons surveyed by APIL in Dundee required a skin allergy test.

Denise added: "We've heard some horrific stories from our members, including hospitalisation, depression, scarring, baldness, and even blindness. Asking clients to take this simple test prior to colouring could save a great deal of suffering."

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Notes to editors:

- For more information, contact Lisa Wardle, Press & PR Officer, APIL, t: 0115 9388715, or Jane Hartwell, Assistant Press & PR Officer, t: 0115 9388702.
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation, whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.
- Further information can also be found at the organisation's website - www.apil.org.uk.