



Speech By  
**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 May 2015

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Ambulance Service, Measles**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.15 pm): Yesterday I received advice about a Queensland paramedic who was unknowingly infectious with measles while on duty. Measles can be a very serious disease. In fact, the paramedic has been hospitalised and is now in a serious but stable condition, so our thoughts are with him. Obviously, this is also a concern for staff and patients who came into contact with the paramedic, so I would like to update the House on the situation and the actions we are taking.

Public health experts from Queensland Health are now contact tracing people who might be affected. They are also trying to identify where the paramedic became infected. So far, the department has identified four hospitals that the paramedic attended while on duty. They have also identified a number of public locations that the man attended, including Moreton Island. Officers from Queensland Health are working with the hospitals involved and have already made contact with dozens of patients. The business operators on Moreton Island have also been contacted and are working closely with us. We are also working closely with the Queensland Ambulance Service to identify any impact on staff. People who have concerns should call 13HEALTH or speak to their GP.

While this is a potentially serious situation, it is important to put this illness in context. This is only the eighth case of measles reported in Queensland so far this year. I have been advised that so far today there have not been any further cases reported. We encourage all of our health staff to be vaccinated, but it is not currently an employment condition to be fully immunised against preventable diseases like measles. This is something that I am investigating. I have this morning asked my department to examine the feasibility of having all paramedics in the Queensland Ambulance Service vaccinated against measles. At the moment a great number of officers have been vaccinated, but I would like to look at the possibility of having all officers vaccinated. I have also asked the department to examine the prospect of a wider vaccination program among health workers.

There has been an average of 33 cases per year of measles over the last five years. Just four people were reported with measles in 2012, but that was followed by one of the biggest outbreaks in recent times in 2013, when 37 cases were traced back to an international traveller. This latest case should serve as a reminder to all Queenslanders, young and old, to speak with their doctor about their vaccination program to ensure they are vaccinated.