



Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (2.36 pm): Right now in Queensland, ramping is the worst it has ever been. Dangerous KPIs set by this health minister are harming patients and leaving families devastated. There are major investigations underway at Caboolture into imaging, there are major investigations in Townsville into urology and there is a measles outbreak spreading across the state. What have we seen from this health minister? What has he said to the families? Has he spent time with them talking about having lost their loved ones? No, he has been on holidays. Queensland families are the ones paying the price.

Queenslanders will continue to pay with their health as we reveal that the LNP has now cut funding for skin cancer awareness campaigns. I want everyone to be aware that Queensland is the skin cancer capital of the world. If we are going to have any hope of ever making sure we see fewer Queenslanders with skin cancer, we have to invest in skin cancer awareness campaigns. It is a huge slap in the face to Queenslanders.

The decision to scrap Queensland's skin cancer awareness campaign is not just short-sighted; it is reckless and it is careless. How many millions are currently being spent advertising the so-called Hospital Rescue Plan? How much money is being spent turning everything from maroon to blue? When it comes to protecting Queenslanders from skin cancer, spending money is apparently not worth it. I would say that \$2.1 million is a minuscule price to pay if it means one Queensland family is spared the heartbreak of a melanoma diagnosis.

It does not stop there. While the health system is in crisis and Queenslanders are losing access to prevention campaigns, our state has seen a worrying return of a disease that we thought we had beaten: measles. We eradicated measles in this state in 2014. We know how dangerous measles can be for babies and immunocompromised people. We eradicated measles through an excellent vaccination campaign where leaders in this state stood up and encouraged people to get vaccinated. Is that what we have seen from this Premier? They are too busy pandering to the dangerous anti-vaxxers that this Premier will not even stand up and say, 'Queensland families, please get your children vaccinated for measles and, while you are at it, get your kids and yourself vaccinated for the flu.' That is what we expect of our leaders.

Heading into this election, the Premier promised to put the experts back in charge. I can tell members what the experts are saying: we need leadership and we need people to tell families to get vaccinated. A deliberate decision not to tell Queenslanders if you have had your vaccination or a deliberate decision not to encourage Queenslanders goes against all medical advice. Recently, I stood with frontline health worker Jason, a pharmacist in Cairns, who is responding directly to the ground zero outbreak happening right now in Far North Queensland. He said very plainly that the most effective thing to fight measles is to get vaccinated. He said that 1,000 per cent it makes a difference when leaders stand up and encourage the community to get vaccinated.

Queensland has the lowest vaccination rates in the country but apparently the Deputy Premier says that is okay. It is not okay. We had eradicated measles years ago. We need leadership and we need it now. When I stood up to encourage families in Cairns to get vaccinated, the Premier called it out. He said I was weaponising vaccinations and that I was frightening people. I am not sure if the Premier has ever seen a baby with measles but that is what is frightening.

We can all do our communities a favour. When we leave this place at the end of the week, let us go out into our communities and encourage families to get vaccinated. That is leadership and that is what our communities need. That is how we keep each other safe.