

Question on Notice

No. 379

Asked on 10 May 2022

MRS L GERBER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister (a) commit to including Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) in Queensland's Newborn Bloodspot Screening (NBS) program and (b) explain why the minister is waiting for another national review process to recommend the inclusion of SMA, given that the Federal Health Minister has advised SMA will not need further consideration by the national body and has urged the states and territories to consider implementing SMA screening on an ongoing basis?

ANSWER

Queensland is committed to having the best, evidence-based newborn screening program possible.

To ensure that Queensland can screen for genetic conditions (such as SMA and SCID) in a timely manner, my Department continues to assess the equipment procurement costs and training needs to perform such genetic testing at scale. As the Member for Currumbin is aware, the Commonwealth has not previously offered funding for such an expansion.

During the recent federal election, I was pleased to note a commitment from the Honourable Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, to create a truly uniform and expanded screening system across Australia.

I look forward to working with the new Albanese Government on this important issue.