

# Brisbane naturopath's 'outrageous, dangerous' Covid vax claims

**A Brisbane nutritionist and naturopath has been called out over 'dangerous and outrageous' Covid vaccine claims, but he says he has a right to question what the government is doing.**

Jill Poulsen

The Government is not doing enough to stop dangerous anti-vax messages being peddled by alternative health practitioners and it's hampering Queensland's already slow vaccination efforts, according to a leading immunologist.



Immunologist and emeritus professor of medicine at UNSW Professor John Dwyer said the proliferation of pseudoscience published by natural health professionals posed an even greater threat than the usual anti-vax types because they were given greater credibility.

Prof Dwyer, who is a member of the Friends of Science in Medicine, pointed to one particularly "outrageous example of dangerous, false information" being provided by a Queensland naturopath and nutritionist.

Brisbane based practitioner Ross Walter has posted articles written by him that claim vaccine manufacturers manipulated their trial data and masks were not effective in reducing the spread of the virus.

"This website is basically saying the vaccines don't work at a time when we are trying to round out our number and get to a point where we can live safely together ... this is the sort of thing we don't need," he said.

But Mr Walter told The Courier-Mail all of his articles were fully referenced and that science was about "questioning".

"It is a fundamental right of anyone to question what the government may say or do when it is backed up by good quality science or data," he said.

"They (Friends of Science in Medicine) are just supporting the government line and current agenda which has had no science backing to it since day one."

Mr Walter, who purports to have qualifications in naturopathy, nutrition and a bachelor of applied science, has a 1.6 star rating on Google with one reviewer claiming she was told he could prevent Covid or cancer if she bought vitamins he sold.

However, Mr Walter denied the woman was a real client of his and was a result of the people trying to ruin his reputation.

The Office of the Health Ombudsman is the one place the public can make a complaint or notification about a health service, and information provided by a health service, including registered and unregistered health practitioners – such as naturopaths.

Professor Dwyer said with no capability for urgent action to be taken to have harmful material removed, it highlighted a serious flaw in the government's ability to deal with the problem.

The government is unable to protect consumers from dangerous misinformation which puts the recipient of that information at risk and therefore the community," he said.

"Legislation to change the terms of reference of the ombudsman's role and the provision of necessary resources is urgently needed."

Health Minister Yvette D'Ath referred inquiries about the issue to her department where a spokesman said claims that COVID-19 was a conspiracy theory were offensive to families that had lost a loved one to the virus.

"Let's get this straight – vaccination isn't a lifestyle choice. For some people it could literally be the difference between life and death," he said.

He said the government was "confident" Queenslanders would "reject this anti-vax nonsense" and get vaccinated to protect their health.