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DOCTORS DAMN ANTI-VACCINATION FILM SCREENINGS

Doctors are warning an anti-vaccination documentary to be screened across regional Queensland could ultimately cost children's lives.

The film *Vaxxed*, which makes false and disproved links between vaccination and autism, is set to be shown in 11 Queensland towns and cities between October 21 and November 5.

AMA Queensland chair Dr Shaun Rudd said he feared some parents could be duped into believing the film's anti-vaccination message and leave their children vulnerable to potentially deadly diseases such as measles and bacterial meningitis.

"This film's director is a former doctor who was struck off by the UK's General Medical Council for serious professional misconduct during his research into vaccination," Dr Rudd said.

"His claims have been completely and repeatedly refuted by independent research and rejected by doctors around the world.

"But sadly many parents believe the lies peddled by the anti-vaccination movement.

"If they are taken in and refuse to vaccinate their children they are putting them at risk of contracting potentially deadly diseases – and heightening the risk to other children and adults in their community."

The first childhood vaccinations were introduced in Australia in 1932. Since then diseases such as tetanus, diphtheria, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, poliomyelitis, congenital rubella and newly acquired hepatitis B have been all but wiped out.

However, low vaccination rates in some areas continue to lead to outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles, mumps and whooping cough.

"The evidence is in and it is overwhelming," Dr Rudd said.

"Vaccination saves lives and the claims made by anti-vaccination campaigners are totally baseless.

"When it comes to immunisation, Queenslanders should listen to their doctor – not dodgy documentaries."

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AMA Queensland is the state's peak medical body which exists to advance the professional interests of doctors and the health of the community. It is an independent organisation representing more than 6,200 doctors – from residents and registrars to public and private specialists and general practitioners.