



**CALL FOR QUEENSLAND HEALTH MINISTER TO APPLY NHMRC GUIDELINES
MEDIA RELEASE**

The Queensland Minister for Health has failed to observe the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) authoritative advice on clinical best practice for children and young people presenting with so-called gender confusion. Instead, he demonstrated his government's own bias in favour of clinically unsound care standards.

In 2018 the NHMRC found there is no evidentiary basis for Melbourne Royal Children's Hospital's *Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for trans and gender Diverse children and adolescents* (ASOCTG). Yet the Minister, Tim Nicholls, explicitly relied on these standards in announcing his government's review of Queensland's paediatric gender services on 28 January.

The NHMRC's preliminary screening of ASOCTG against its own *Standards for Clinical Guidelines* found that:

the guideline did not include a funding statement, an evidence base for the recommendations or information about conflict of interest, and ... it would not meet the portal selection criteria, so a full assessment was not carried out.

The Royal Melbourne Children's Hospital launched ASOCTG as official "Australian" guidelines, endorsed by AusPATH (the local version of WPATH: World Professional Association for Transgender Health), without NHMRC endorsement. AusPATH and WPATH were established by trans lobby groups and are not representative of sound clinical practice.

The 2024 Cass Review of gender identity services for children and young people in the UK confirmed the NHMRC's assessment. It found that the so-called Dutch protocol, on which WPATH, AusPATH and ASOCTG guidelines are based, lacked a sound evidence base. Even the original research team that developed the Dutch protocol has since acknowledged that there is no sound evidence that its application has been beneficial. Moreover, the original Dutch study had been funded by the manufacturers of puberty blockers.

"Girls and young women are being harmed disproportionately by the gender industry making it ever more urgent that Australian Health Ministers apply the advice provided by the Australian government's primary health and medical research funding agency: the NHMRC", said Australian Feminists for Women's Rights (AF4WR) co-convenor, Emeritus Professor Bronwyn Winter.

"Mr Nicholls' ignoring of the best available clinical advice in his announcement of a State-based inquiry thus begs the question of whether the government's announcement is simply another political move to kick the football of the gender industry down the line until after the Federal election", Professor Winter said.

Australian Feminists for Women's Rights is a left-wing feminist organisation providing research-based advocacy on women's sex-based rights.

END