

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RADIOLOGY CAMPAIGN TARGETS GEORGE CHRISTENSEN



Screengrab from the television commercial running in regional QLD

Television commercials targeting George Christensen’s marginal electorate of Dawson will start airing next week, demanding that the Coalition make good on its promise to radiology patients.

Produced by the Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association (ADIA), the [television campaign](#), titled “Medicare – ignore it and it will go away”, highlights the fact that the Coalition promised prior to the last election to reduce the cost of x-rays on scans – but has not kept its promise.

Patient rebates for life-saving radiology services have remained frozen since 1998 – not even increasing to match the rate of inflation in 20 years.

The ad will run on high rotation throughout March, both in metropolitan markets and regional Queensland networks including the WIN network that takes in Mackay, Proserpine and Townsville.

“Around one in three regional Queenslanders need access to x-rays and scans every year, and they will often need more than one service per visit,” said **Dr Siavash Es’haghi**, President of ADIA and Managing Director at Imaging Queensland.

“Many have to travel great distances to get diagnosed and treated. It’s a vital service in diagnosing and treating a huge range of illnesses, and so affordable access is critical.

“And yet, because radiology has been ignored by successive governments for 20 years, Queenslanders are now paying average gaps of almost \$95.

“George Christensen is a member of the Turnbull Coalition Government that finally recognised this problem before the last Federal election and promised to end the Medicare freeze, but they haven’t kept their promise.

“They’ve forgotten about Queensland patients. And Mr Christensen has refused to meet with us in Canberra, which is extremely disappointing.”

Dr Es'haghi said Mr Christensen’s recent comments that those unable to afford a visit to the GP should save money instead by presenting to hospital emergency departments* showed he was “out of touch with the real pain facing patients”.

“Our hospital system is under enough pressure as it is,” he said.

“We know that almost 50,000 Queenslanders every year don’t get the x-rays and scans they need because they can’t afford them**.

“Sending people to the emergency room is not a viable option.

“The only real solution is for the Coalition to deliver on their promise and end the freeze on Medicare rebates for radiology patients at the same time the GP freeze ends in July.

“Mr Christensen needs to show leadership on this issue because it affects everyone in his electorate.”

*[Townsville Bulletin, 26/2/18](#)

**ABS Statistics 2015/16 - 46,800

ADIA represents radiology practices throughout Australia, both in the community and in hospitals. It promotes the ongoing development of quality accreditation standards and appropriate funding settings so that Australians can have affordable access to quality radiology services. This supports radiology’s central role in the diagnosis, treatment and management of a broad range of conditions in every branch of medicine.

For interviews, please call Phil Martin, Michels Warren on 0418 817 876