

Coal seam gas blamed for health problems

By Samantha Turnbull And Joanne Shoebridge

Queensland Doctors Have Reported Seeing Patients With Health Problems Believed To Be Related To Coal Seam Gas Activities

The Australian Medical Association's incoming president in Queensland has confirmed several of its member doctors have raised concerns that residents living near coal seam gas mining operations may be showing symptoms of gas exposure.

Queensland Health has issued a statement saying there 'hasn't been an unusual increase in patients with those symptoms' and they're 'working with GPs to establish any patterns of illness.'

AMA-Queensland president elect Dr Christian Rowan said the association was concerned by the reports.

"We've received some anecdotal reports in relation to symptoms that would be consistent with gas exposure like nausea and vomiting, dizziness, throat and nose irritation those type of things," he said.

"Members of our organisation are general practitioners and some of those members have reported back to us having had patients present with these types of symptoms who are living near areas where there's CSG exploration occurring.

"We believe the public needs to have confidence in this industry, so that is concerning from our perspective."

Sick families

Brian Monk is a land owner from Tara in southern Queensland and believes health problems in his family are a result of coal seam gas activities near his property.

He said they've experienced nose bleeds, burning and irritated eyes, skin rashes, headaches, coughs, difficulty breathing and dermatitis.

One of his grandsons has also had inexplicable seizures.

Mr Monk said more than 20 families who live near him said they had been affected in the same way.



Tara resident Brian Monk who says his family is suffering from health issues as a result of nearby coal seam gas activities (CSG Free Northern Rivers - Supplied)

ABC North Coast NSW

"Wherever this industry has been done over the world these are the same symptoms that people have complained about and it's interesting that none of these symptoms existed prior to coal seam gas ramping up out here," he said.

Mr Monk said he had reported the symptoms to relevant authorities, but had not heard of any investigation into the link between coal seam gas and health issues.

Dr Rowan said he believed the Queensland Government began investigating the issue in June.