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Union urges mining workers to get checked as more dust victims are uncovered

Today the CFMEU Mining and Energy Division is urging current and past Queensland mining workers to seek urgent medical advice as the number of dust-related victims continues to rise.

Stephen Smyth, CFMEU M&E QLD District President said there are more cases of dust-related victims that are yet to be announced by the Queensland Government.

“While there are 22 confirmed cases of Coal Workers’ Pneumoconiosis – or Black Lung – already confirmed by the Queensland Government, the union is aware of at least another dozen dust-related cases yet to be confirmed,” said Mr Smyth.

“Coal miners go to work, not to die. The tremendous historic cover up by the mining sector is over – now we need every mining worker – current or past – to seek medical advice and get tests done to rule them out.

“What we have learnt through recent investigations and evidence given to the recent Parliamentary Inquiry into the issue, is that dust diseases don’t discriminate on age, type of mine, or work performed – any mining worker who has passed through the sector is at risk, and it’s deplorable.

“If you have a loved one who has worked in the sector – please remind them to take this seriously. We are working with our members, but this will affect more than our members – it affects families and communities; everyone has a role to play.

“Now we need action. The Queensland Government is already working to legislate key changes to protect workers in the sector, restrict permissible dust levels and deliver adequate protections and compensation to victims. We need these changes to be implemented promptly.

“We know that as long as mining companies are regulating their own sector, and auditing their own dust levels, workers remain at risk.

“We urge every mining worker to seek urgent medical exams to identify and treat any potential risks to their health,” said Mr Smyth.

If mining workers in Queensland believe their health is at risk or need assistance in obtaining health scans, they can contact the union on (07) 4957 2644.

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