

**INQUIRY INTO KOORAGANG ISLAND ORICA  
CHEMICAL LEAK**

**Name:** Ms Vicki Warwyck

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Partially Confidential

I would like to know why, in the wake of the hexavalent incident, that medical information was withheld from the Stockton community.

My understanding is that it is rare for chromium (in forms other than hexavalent) to deposit in red cells. However, Chromium VI (hexavalent) acts like the proverbial Trojan Horse, making its way into the red blood cells, where in time it breaks down into other forms of chromium. But it has no business being there in the first place.

I rang Hunter New England Health and spoke to [redacted] and asked about the specific chromium red-cell test. I was told it was not available. At the Orica Start Up community meeting I spoke to [redacted] and he also told me this test was not available. He confirmed what [redacted] had told me - that an extensive investigation was done and no laboratory in Australia-let alone NSW, did the test.

A chromium red-cell blood test is available. Lavery Pathology takes the blood sample and sends it R.P.A. laboratories. I got a referral from my G.P. and had a blood sample collected at Lavery Pathology.

Lavery Pathology did the wrong test by "mistake" - they did a Chromium Blood Plasma test instead of the requested Chromium Red-Cell Blood Test.

When I insisted on having the correct test done, I was told that [redacted] (Clinical Chemist at Lavery Pathology) had rung my G.P. ([redacted]) to convince him that I did not need a chromium red-cell test.

Upon my insistence, another blood sample was taken and sent to R.P.A. where the correct test was done. I have since received the results of this test.

At the same Orica Start Up Community Meeting at Stockton (27/09/11), I also spoke to [redacted] from WorkCover. He informed me that the workers at Orica who were affected by the hexavalent incident were offered a chromium red-cell blood test. He told me that a doctor in Sydney was dealing with it and told me he was not at liberty to tell me which laboratory was doing the blood tests.

I feel that there was a deliberate attempt to withhold this medical information from the residents of Stockton so that possible adverse health effects of the hexavalent would not be evident.