

Response from Andrew Bolt, Sky News presenter:

You broadcast it.

I have criticised News Ltd reports many, many times. More times than you have criticised the ABC. Had I been aware of Foxtel commissioning this, I would most certainly have criticised that at the time.

But, as I said in my piece, I was not aware of this program until last week.

May I now ask if you intend to correct a plainly false statement put to air by Media Watch two weeks ago?

You broadcast this claim regarding ivermectin: “there’s no evidence that it works”. Paul Barry accused MP Craig Kelly of spreading “dangerous misinformation” by saying there were such studies.

But just three days earlier, the technical lead of the World Health Organisation’s fight against the virus confirmed what Kelly had said.

She said 11 studies showed “promising” results for ivermectin, and 56 more were coming.

The COVID-19 taskforce had also admitted it would now examine five new studies on ivermectin, which it failed to admit all suggested the drug worked.

Were you aware of those studies? If so, why did you not mention them? Did you deceive your audience? Do you intend to correct the record?

Reply to Bolt from Tim Latham, Executive Producer, Media Watch:

No, we did not deceive our audience. Nor did we say ‘there is no evidence that it works.’

Media Watch quoted Professor Steven Tong, who said: “With Ivermectin, at this stage you would say there’s no evidence that it works...”

We also quoted Craig Kelly on Sky saying:

CRAIG KELLY: ... there’s 33 published studies and all 33 show that ivermectin is effective.

ROWAN DEAN: OK. Effective of what?

CRAIG KELLY: Effective at reducing COVID.

- Sky News, 18 January, 2021

What we did say is the drug is “unproven” and I’m comfortable with that until evidence proves otherwise.