

Statement from Professor Andrew Whitehouse, Professor of Autism Research at the Telethon Kids Institute:

1. What's your reaction to the Nine News story?

I was disappointed. Purported 'miracle cures' prey on families' vulnerabilities. There is no scientific evidence this 'treatment' can support autistic children and their families.

2. What are the dangers in Nine News promoting this therapy?

These stories have enormous human cost. They keep parents up at night wondering should they give these unproven therapies a go. They encourage parents to spend thousands of dollars on unproven therapies, often with borrowed money. They divert the child and family's time away from receiving effective supports, or from simply being kids. They reflect autistic children as kids to cure, rather than kids to value and cherish. They make families expend emotional, time and financial costs that they simply do not have. These stories are not victimless. They come at the expense of some of our most vulnerable children and families.

3. Is there any credible science or research to support the use red light/laser therapy to treat patients with autism?

There is no credible science that demonstrates any clinical effect of red light/laser 'therapy' in supporting autistic children and their families.