




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Health Update

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): I rise to give an update on the management of COVID-19 in our state. There are no new cases of COVID-19 to report overnight. It is now 10 days since the last locally acquired case: a woman who dined in the same restaurant as another woman who had been to Melbourne. The results of tests conducted on two young women who are believed to have travelled from Sydney when it was a hotspot but before the border with New South Wales was closed were negative. Until recently Queensland had been the envy of the world, with 63 straight days of zero community transmission, but we all know it does not take much to spark an outbreak. That is why it was devastating to find out that two individuals broke the rules by travelling to Melbourne and back to the southern suburbs, risking Queenslanders' lives. Despite challenges in the past few weeks, Queensland remains on top of COVID-19.

As of this morning our total number of cases remains at 1,089; 11 of those are active. That is why we have been able to open our state up, allowing businesses to open and Queenslanders to get back to work. That is not the case in other parts of Australia. There have now been almost 20,000 cases Australia wide. Tragically, 37 people died in Melbourne last weekend alone. We have just heard that another 19 people died yesterday. There have been roughly twice as many deaths in this second wave as the first. There are outbreaks connected to schools, family groups, restaurants, churches and workplaces. More than 700 healthcare workers have been infected. The city of Melbourne has gone from lockdown to a curfew, costing the Australian economy billions and leaving the residents of our second-largest city unable to work normally. While that is bad, news from across the world is even more tragic. America has now had over five million cases and more than 160,000 deaths. Globally we are up to almost 20 million cases and over 730,000 deaths. It took six months to get to 10 million cases but just 43 days to double to 20 million.

The outcomes in Queensland are due to a few important things. It is testament to the hard work and planning of our health service that we remain in control of this disease and able to focus on recovery. Thanks to our response over the past fortnight we have avoided a potential disaster. The Melbourne-Logan cluster was thankfully confined to just five positive cases. We have proven that we will not accept rule breakers. Even in the NRL players and staff must follow the rules or stiff penalties apply, no matter what position they hold. Queenslanders have been exceptional throughout this pandemic. Thanks to an extraordinary rush in the past two weeks we have passed 683,824 tests.

We cannot forget, though, that Australia—and especially Victoria—is in the thick of a major health crisis that will take a long time to resolve. The case numbers are alarming and the death toll is horrific. Anyone who questions our tough measures, be it border restrictions, mandatory quarantining or the capping of gatherings, should take note of what is happening in other parts of our country. Lives are being lost or devastated not just by the disease but also the ramifications of a further shutdown. We will do everything we can to ensure that does not happen here, because every Queensland life matters and because there are no new jobs in a second wave.