




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus Vaccination, Multicultural Communities

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.35 am): Protecting and safeguarding Queenslanders from COVID-19 is the No. 1 priority of our government, whether or not English is their first language and irrespective of cultural or religious background. As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I would like to reiterate our Premier's message to encourage all Queenslanders from all backgrounds to get vaccinated without delay. There is no better time than right now to book an appointment for your first or second dose. We want to make sure our culturally and linguistically diverse communities have the confidence, information and support they need to get vaccinated. My department has been working alongside Queensland Health to ensure information is translated into as many languages as are needed to get the correct information to our multicultural communities.

Last week I joined the Premier and Chief Health Officer at the community leaders' COVID-19 vaccination community forum convened by the Premier and Multicultural Australia. Community leaders shared their perspectives on the vaccination rollout and their unique insights into how to overcome any barriers to vaccination uptake in communities. Responses from the 112 participants are being collated, and I eagerly await any new ideas or approaches that may arise because of this consultation.

Again I would like to assure the House that my department is working closely with the Queensland Vaccination Operations Coordinator's team, Queensland Health and funded partners to engage communities. These partnerships include the Refugee Health Network's COVID-19 Health Engagement Project and our funded community connector role within the Australian Red Cross. By working together we are constantly honing the way information is created and delivered.

My department is also responding to specific community requests to provide vaccine rollout information sessions to their places of worship and other community venues. Staff are engaging with community leaders to understand and respond to barriers that may discourage someone from being vaccinated and working alongside Queensland Health to continue to improve access to vaccination registration bookings by including the 134 COVID line with multicultural resources.

COVID-19 has affected the lives of all Queenslanders, especially our religiously diverse communities who often depend so deeply on their faith communities and leaders for advice and information. That is why we have worked over the past 18 months to support and, where needed, facilitate meetings with the Chief Health Officer and Deputy Chief Health Officer so they better understand what places of worship can and cannot do to stop the spread of COVID-19 among individuals, families and communities. We know that people want to hear assurances from trusted people, often in language at a grassroots level, to give them confidence to understand when to get tested and how and where to get vaccinated. We will continue to do all we can to ensure COVID information is distributed to Queensland's diverse communities in partnership with Queensland Health and our many stakeholders as well as faith and community leaders.

To those who have already had their jab, have them booked in or have started the process, my heartfelt thank you. It is imperative that we all keep working together as Queenslanders to keep our families, our friends and our communities safe.