




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.00 am): Protecting and safeguarding all Queenslanders from COVID-19 has been and will continue to be an immediate priority for our government whether or not English is their first language and irrespective of their cultural or religious background. As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, my urgent message to people from all backgrounds is to get vaccinated without delay.

As a government, we are always looking to do more to remove the real and perceived barriers some people face in our community. This includes dispelling myths causing vaccine hesitancy or accessibility issues. Queensland is not a homogenous state; Queensland is of course a multicultural state. We know our diverse communities sometimes need a different or unique approach or initiative to serve their needs. That is why our government has been working so closely with community leaders to encourage vaccinations to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our community.

I was delighted to join the Deputy Premier and Deputy Chief Health Officer, Dr Lynne McKinlay, in a multicultural community leaders online meeting, hosted last night by Multicultural Australia. About 60 leaders were online as we worked together on how to boost vaccination rates. One of the first things we acknowledged was the amazing voluntary work done by multicultural community leaders to so successfully promote important COVID-19 messaging in culturally accessible ways across Queensland. We greatly appreciate these efforts and acknowledge the way the leaders have stepped up to protect the safety of their communities.

As the vaccination urgency grows, we are again calling on community leaders to draw on their considerable expertise, experience and wisdom for creative ways to reach all Queenslanders with the important messaging about the urgent need to vaccinate and to identify barriers that need to be overcome. Just as we have relied on the advice from mayors about the issues impacting vaccination uptake in certain regional areas, so too we have asked for our multicultural leaders' advice on issues impacting their communities. We received a number of valuable suggestions from our leaders at the meeting and all will be considered.

We are at the crucial juncture in our fight against COVID and the delta variant. The critical date of 17 December is looming large for opening our borders, or earlier if we reach that 80 per cent target. We want all our multicultural communities to be fully informed about the risks of not being vaccinated once our borders are open. We want every Queenslanders to feel confident to get vaccinated. We know our multicultural leaders hold the faith and confidence of their communities. The Palaszczuk government will continue to work hand in hand with our community leaders and we will continue to value their unique insights into how to address vaccination across Queensland.