




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.10 am): The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to getting every eligible Queenslanders vaccinated against COVID-19. We know this is the best thing we can do to reunite families, support our economy and, most importantly, keep people safe. Getting vaccinated is particularly important for young Queenslanders. As the Minister for Youth Affairs I have been out across Queensland talking to young people about how important it is that they come forward. We have seen a really strong vaccination uptake amongst high school students, with 55.21 per cent of 16- to 19-year-olds now having had their first dose. That is an increase of 5.89 per cent since we started our vaxathon last week, and I want to say thank you to all of the students who have taken the time to go out and get vaccinated.

Schoolies is coming up in less than a month. We are strongly encouraging all school leavers to get their first vaccination this week if they have not already. Getting vaccinated this week means you will be able to get your second dose in time to celebrate the end of school with your mates. We will continue to work through our Safer Schoolies Response alongside accommodation providers and third parties like schoolies.com to continue this push.

Universities are also stepping up to the plate. On Friday I was at one of Queensland Health's pop-up vaccination clinics just outside the parliament here where QUT students were getting vaccinated on their way to class. In fact, it is back out there today. This is a great initiative because we know that we need to meet young people where they are. I am pleased to advise that almost all Queensland universities are offering vaccinations to students on campus, whether that be through Queensland Health vaccination hubs like at JCU Smithfield, CQU Gladstone, through university health services offering dedicated clinics at Griffith or UQ, or through the hardworking medical staff in university medical centres who provide really important mental and physical health support on campus year-round. It is great to see everyone playing their part.

Some young Queenslanders may feel invincible and like this is not a priority, but we have seen very clearly that this virus can impact anyone. Just yesterday we heard from the Premier about the unvaccinated 17-year-old in my community on the Gold Coast, so my message to young Queenslanders is simple: get vaccinated. It is safe, effective and easy. Get vaccinated so you can travel. Get vaccinated so you can enjoy schoolies. Get vaccinated to look after yourself, your family and your loved ones.