



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 9 March 2021

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Coronavirus, Vaccine**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.57 am): The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine is a task of historic proportions. In the first three weeks of our vaccine rollout we brought online three vaccination hubs—at the Gold Coast University Hospital, at Princess Alexandra Hospital and at Cairns Hospital. Last week we opened three more hubs—at Metro North's Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service, known as STARS, in the Herston Quarter; Sunshine Coast University Hospital; and Townsville University Hospital.

Thanks to the success of training and implementing our six hubs in administering the Pfizer vaccine, from yesterday we have been able to stand up two additional hubs, in Bundaberg and Logan, to administer the AstraZeneca vaccine. We went from delivering 2,030 vaccines in our first week to 8,300 at the end of our second week. Now, after just 15 days, we have already vaccinated over 10,000 people. Next Monday it will be time for Zoe, our first Queenslanders to be vaccinated, to come back and get her second vaccine, making her the first person to be fully vaccinated in Queensland. I cannot wait for Zoe to come back.

As we committed, we have allowed the vaccination hubs to gradually build their capacity to ensure all of the staff have confidence in handling this complex vaccine. I congratulate the administration staff, nurses, doctors and security staff—all of the amazing health workers running our vaccination hubs. I have now had the pleasure of visiting all six of the vaccination hubs around Queensland and seeing firsthand the level of professionalism being displayed. I thank the various members who came along and joined me in those visits.

I must remind everyone what the Chief Health Officer said, and that is that this is a marathon, not a sprint. This is one of the biggest public health undertakings in history. We live in the most decentralised state in Australia, so to protect everyone we can it is crucial we get the logistics right. Vaccinations will depend on the supply from the Commonwealth. As we move from phase 1a into phase 1b and beyond, the vaccination program will be progressively expanded across Queensland. More locations will come online, including more hospitals. GPs and pharmacies will deliver the vaccine to more Queenslanders as safely and as quickly as possible. As the Premier has announced today, we will be bringing the QEII and Toowoomba hospitals online and we hope to have them commencing from tomorrow, with more sites opening in the very near future. In the meantime, we need to continue the practices that have protected us so well up until now.

As the Premier observed, we have hit another milestone recently, with more than two million COVID tests being undertaken since COVID started. I want to thank all of those pathologists—the public and private pathologists—across Queensland. Two million tests is incredible. I want to thank each and every one of those people for coming forward and getting tested when they felt unwell. Along with good hygiene and physical distancing, it has proven to be one of our most effective weapons against this virus. This is just the beginning of Queensland's vaccine journey and I want to encourage every Queenslanders to get the vaccine when it is offered to them.