



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


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 March 2021

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Coronavirus, Vaccine; Coronavirus, Prevention**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): Queensland continues to crush the COVID curve, but we cannot become complacent. Queensland has recorded five new COVID cases overnight, all of which we have identified in hotel quarantine.

It has now been 63 days since there was a COVID case infectious in the community. Since 5 October 2020, 175 of the 192 new cases reported have been identified as overseas acquired and in hotel quarantine, not only demonstrating the absolute importance of our hotel quarantine system in protecting the Queensland community but also highlighting the reality that COVID continues to ravage other nations across the globe.

Queensland now has 37 active cases. Unlike other jurisdictions, all positive COVID cases identified in hotel quarantine are transferred to hospital. That is why getting our phase 1a frontline health workers vaccinated is so important. These are the people who are caring for our positive COVID patients each and every day. By ensuring these health heroes are vaccinated, along with our health quarantine workers and other phase 1a groups, we can protect all of our community. I am proud to see that over the last 24 hours there were 7,717 tests completed by Queenslanders. Testing remains an important weapon in our fight against COVID-19. Again, I remind all Queenslanders: if you are feeling unwell, go and get tested. Make sure you are washing your hands, staying home when sick and maintaining social distancing.

Our vaccination effort continues to gather pace, with two new vaccination hubs coming online yesterday. We now have eight vaccination hubs in operation. I am very excited with the news that the Premier has announced today of a number of new sites opening by the end of the week—most importantly, Redcliffe being amongst them. I once again want to thank all of the amazing health staff who have worked so hard to make these vaccine hubs a success. Yesterday, Queensland administered 1,904 vaccine doses—our best number to date. That brings us to 11,996 vaccine doses administered in Queensland so far. Queensland has always been clear that we would scale up our vaccine capacity over time, and I am happy to see that this approach is being vindicated.

As Queensland continues to vaccinate our population in the absence of community transmission, we cannot lose sight of just how fortunate we are. Globally, there have now been more than 117 million COVID cases and more than two million global deaths. I want to acknowledge that when I was at the PA Hospital recently, talking to some of the recipients of the vaccine who were waiting and being observed afterwards, one of the pathologists I was chatting with said that she was just so proud to get this vaccine. She said that she comes from the Philippines, that her parents are in the Philippines and that her mum is hesitant to get the vaccine. She said that she lost her dad to COVID late last year. As the tears rolled down her face, she said that she just could not believe how fortunate she was to be in Queensland, Australia, and how it meant so much to be getting this vaccination to be protected. I want to acknowledge her loss and grief.

Even though we have not lost many lives here in Queensland and Australia, so many people I have met have lost loved ones overseas. Many of our health workers have family and friends who live in the UK who have passed away. I want to acknowledge their grief as well. While there are some countries that are seeking a swift vaccination for their population, the reality is that only a very small percentage of the global population has been fully vaccinated. That means that we cannot let our guard down; we must continue to be vigilant and respond to the very real threat that continues to be posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to thank every single Queenslander for all their work. We still have some way to go, but by continuing to work together we will get through this.