




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Vaccine; Queensland Travel Declaration; Auslan Interpreters

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.53 am): As the Premier noted, yesterday the Commonwealth government announced it had accepted the advice of the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation to change the eligibility criteria for the Pfizer vaccine. Due to a growing body of evidence, ATAGI has recommended that the administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine be restricted to members of the community 60 years of age and over. That means that the cohort of people eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine has been expanded to include the 50- to 59-year-old cohort. The estimated population of 50- to 59-year-olds in Queensland is more than 620,000 people. Of that number, the data available to us suggests that around 458,000 are yet to get their first dose of the vaccine and will be eligible to receive a dose of Pfizer at a Queensland vaccination hub.

This means that Queensland is now administering the Pfizer vaccine to Queenslanders between the ages of 40 to 59 years old and 1a and 1b workers of any age. Clearly, an increase in the number of people we are responsible for vaccinating will have an impact on Queensland's component of the vaccine rollout. As we have seen through our vaccine numbers in recent days, our vaccine capacity has significantly expanded as we have brought community based vaccine hubs online. While we will continue to bring additional hubs online in coming weeks, our capacity to administer the Pfizer vaccine is constrained by the available supply of the vaccine from the Commonwealth. Once again, I would encourage all eligible Queenslanders to book an appointment before coming to our vaccine clinics. I ask that people remain patient and respect the amazing work of the staff at our vaccine hubs as demand for our hubs continues to grow.

I also want to acknowledge the tremendous take-up of our new Queensland travel declaration, which was only announced yesterday morning. As of 6.30 am today, we have had more than 22,000 people complete their travel declaration on the Queensland government website. This is an amazing take-up.

Ms Palaszczuk: They all want to come to Queensland.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection: they do all want to come to Queensland. The new travel declaration comes into force from one o'clock tomorrow morning, Saturday morning. We are already aware that tomorrow alone will see over 10,000 people arrive in Queensland. I thank the many travellers for embracing our efforts to keep Queensland safe. I also want to clarify that it is our intention that this declaration system will only operate for the duration of the declared public health emergency and will not be a permanent feature of interstate travel. This is just another way that the Palaszczuk government is keeping Queensland COVID-safe. We have in fact been asked that, so I thought it important to clarify.

Lastly, I want to pass on a public thank you from Jean Mathieson, a member of the Mango Hill Progress Association. Jean asked the member for Bancroft if we could give a thank you to our Auslan people who perform sign language at our press conferences. On behalf of Jean, the Palaszczuk government and all Queenslanders, can I say a huge thank you to our Auslan interpreters for their very important service.