

Question on Notice
No. 1429
Asked on 16 November 2021

Mr S Andrew asked Premier and Minister for the Olympics (Hon. A Palaszczuk)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the government's decision to impose vaccine mandates on Queensland workers—

Will the Premier provide (a) a detailed explanatory statement, citing all the relevant constitutional and public health case law, along with all statistical data-sets and peer reviewed studies, on which the government's mandates policy is based (with specific reference to each category of affected worker), (b) copies of all expert risk assessments, regulatory impact studies and cost-benefit reports obtained by the government, that assesses the 'costs' to Queensland and its people as a consequence of these mandates (with particular reference to the social, economic and mental health costs - over the immediate AND long-term), (c) copies of all expert risk assessments, regulatory impact studies and cost-benefit analyses obtained by the government, that assess the impacts mandates will have on Queensland's already struggling hospital and health system (with specific reference to the loss of over 7,000 fully trained healthcare workers) and (d) details of any safeguards/protections the government is offering workers and their families, that will compensate them for any serious and debilitating adverse reactions they experience, including death, as a result of receiving these gene therapy vaccine shots?

ANSWER:

The *Public Health Act 2005* gives emergency powers to the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers to make directions to limit or respond to the spread of COVID-19 in Queensland.

Factors the Chief Health Officer considers when making a Public Health Direction in relation to COVID-19 include, the epidemiological situation globally, nationally and in Queensland; capacity of the public health system to respond to outbreaks; capacity of the broader health system to deal with a sudden surge in demand for care (i.e. PPE, ventilators); and community acceptance of control measures (i.e. social distancing, quarantine).

Decisions are based on the most up to date expert advice of the Communicable Diseases Network of Australia and the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

Engagement and collaboration across government and industry provides the balance between keeping Queenslanders safe and ensuring that the key aspects of our economy, whether it be essential services, manufacturing, construction, resources, agriculture or other industries continue to operate and keep Queensland running.

Under these emergency powers, public health directions are given to ensure travellers quarantine upon arriving in Queensland, to require businesses to collect and share contact tracing information and provide enhanced safeguards for vulnerable populations in aged care, hospitals and disability accommodation.

During development, vaccines are tested through phased trials designed to assess that the vaccine works and prompts an effective immune response in different people, as well as

assessing safety and side effects. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is responsible for assessing COVID-19 vaccines for safety, quality, and effectiveness before it can be supplied in Australia. Like other medicines and vaccines, only COVID-19 vaccines approved by the TGA will be provided in Australia. Information about the COVID-19 vaccines including the approval, evaluation, safety monitoring and reporting processes is available at www.tga.gov.au/covid-19-vaccines.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) advises on the medical administration of vaccines in Australia.

In Queensland, all consumers are required to complete a COVID-19 Vaccination Consent form in order to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Consumers are asked to confirm that they have read and understood current information on the vaccines provided by the Federal Government Department of Health which includes details regarding all real and potential side effects associated with receiving the approved COVID-19 vaccine.

Queensland has, and will continue to, prioritise decisions to protect the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders, including through vaccination.