

Question on Notice
No. 27
Asked on 23 February 2021

Mr T Watts asked Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. A Palaszczuk)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the proposed quarantine facility at Wellcamp Airport—

Will the Premier provide the detailed plan, including (a) the proposed facility's operational guidelines, (b) why Toowoomba is not an 'immunisation hub' and (c) if Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service facilities will be used for infected patients from the facility?

ANSWER:

My Government is committed to protecting the health, safety and livelihoods of all Queenslanders during this unprecedented global health pandemic.

Queensland's quarantine system has been a key component of our successful COVID-19 response. However, given the increased transmissibility of new COVID-19 variants and the need for Queensland to ensure the long-term sustainability of our quarantine systems, all viable alternative quarantine models are being considered.

The Queensland and Federal Governments are undertaking a feasibility assessment of a joint national quarantine facility at Wellcamp Airport, Toowoomba. The Queensland Government is currently seeking assurances from the Federal Government over several threshold issues for the proposed Wellcamp Airport facility, including the Federal Government's facilitation of direct international flights into the airport and a commitment to provide the necessary resources and support to safely operate the proposed national quarantine facility. The quarantine facility will only work if it is a joint initiative between the Federal and State Governments.

If the facility progresses, its operational guidelines will be based on the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee's (AHPPC) National Hotel Quarantine Principles, recommendations from the Halton National Review of Hotel Quarantine, and the operational guidelines, policies and procedures that underpin Queensland's existing hotel quarantine system.

The location of vaccination sites is guided by the COVID-19 vaccine national rollout strategy. For Phase 1a, vaccination sites have been established across Queensland, including at Toowoomba Hospital, which was opened on 10 March 2021.

As more vaccine supply becomes available, the rate of vaccination will increase and additional vaccination sites will be opened. Details on additional vaccination sites will be released as we enter the next phases of the vaccine rollout. Please refer to the COVID-19 Vaccine Queensland rollout strategy published on https://www.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0024/155328/qld-vaccine-rollout.pdf.

If the quarantine facility progresses, an infection control management plan for the facility will be developed, based on best National and Queensland practices. This will consider the

adequacy of Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service facilities to provide health services to the facility including to those who have tested positive to the virus.

The highest priority of the Queensland Government is the health, safety and wellbeing of the community. This has guided the Government's holistic response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to guide the decisions about establishing regional quarantine facilities.

The Federal Government needs to advise whether they will support a regional quarantine facility in Queensland or not.