

CORONAVIRUS — NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN — VACCINATION THRESHOLD

413. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the government's position that it will be targeting zero cases of COVID-19 even when a vaccination threshold of 80 per cent is reached in Western Australia.

- (1) Has the Premier sought advice from the Chief Health Officer as to what percentage of vaccination in WA will need to be achieved to safely move to phase D of the national COVID plan?
- (2) If yes, will he table that advice?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) In terms of the specifics at the end of the Leader of the Opposition's question, phase D is part of the national rollout agreed to by the states, territories and commonwealth on 30 July. Phase D does not set out an exact vaccination level to reach that point, but it indicates that at that point in time, COVID would be able to be treated like the flu or any other virus. There is a fundamental misunderstanding from the Prime Minister down about that. We have not specified a vaccination level for that phase. When people said over the course of the last couple of days that it was 80 per cent, that is not the plan agreed to by the Premiers and the Prime Minister. That is not the plan, so I think people need to go and read the plan. In terms of the actual vaccination rate that will allow us to get there, that will be a decision of the national cabinet—I expect on the advice of the Australian Healthcare Protection Principal Committee and a whole range of other inputs some time in the future, but we are nowhere near that.

On the broader argument that occurred over the last couple of days, I did an interview with Sky News on Thursday in which I said that my preferred position is not to have COVID in Western Australia. That then went to air on Sunday, and it launched a firestorm of criticism across Australia. My preferred position is not to have COVID. Somehow people get angry that that is my position. I find it extraordinary, I find it ridiculous, that you get criticised for saying that you prefer not to have COVID. Would people rather we were like New South Wales? I saw Melissa Price's column this morning in *The West Australian*; she wants us to be like New South Wales! The Liberal Party seems to want us to be like New South Wales. I note that I am getting criticised by Nationals WA members now. They seem to want the New South Wales model. Madam Speaker, I do not want the New South Wales model. That government has failed. It has failed! Its moment of truth was in late June, and when it had the opportunity to deal with it, it did not—and for that it must forever be held accountable.