

CORONAVIRUS — RESTRICTIONS — EASING

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

The SPEAKER: Members, are there any questions? Leader of the Opposition.

Several members interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: That has given me a fright! It was very enthusiastic, member for Kalgoorlie; I thought I had got our order wrong!

I refer to the fact that Western Australia is the last jurisdiction to require the equivalent of a G2G PASS, and news today that the Northern Territory has scrapped its vaccine check-in requirements for licensed venues on the basis that the Northern Territory has a largely vaccinated community and that it was a proportionate response to the risk the community faced.

- (1) Given Western Australia has one of the highest triple vaccinated populations in the nation and there is no longer a hard border, when will the government scrap the G2G PASS requirement?
- (2) When will the Premier drop the check-in requirement for licensed venues in Western Australia?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

- (1)–(2) As you know, Madam Speaker, we made a number of changes recently, which started last week, which reduced some of the requirements for people in terms of the density limits and so forth of venues across the state. A whole range of changes have already been made. Further changes are starting on 14 April, which will remove the 500-person cap on hospitality venues. At that point, we will basically be back to what we term level 1 restrictions, which are relatively mild compared with what has been in place around Australia at various times during the pandemic.

Obviously, Western Australia is in a very different position from other states in that we are now, essentially, going through our first wave. Victoria is up to wave 5 or thereabouts. New South Wales has been through many waves, and we are, essentially, in our first wave, so our situation is quite different from other states. On the way through this pandemic, we have accepted the medical advice that one of the most important things we can do is get to very high levels of vaccination. It is one of the key components of keeping Western Australians safe and reducing hospitalisation, ICU and ventilator rates. The G2G PASS requires people entering Western Australia to have adhered to the vaccination requirements, and the vaccination requirements going into certain venues are an important part of that—that is why they are in place, so we encourage vaccination amongst Western Australians. Our first and second dose vaccination rate is around 99 per cent, and our third dose vaccination rate is now at 76 per cent. We want to continue to get the third dose rate up, particularly as we head towards winter when people may be more vulnerable. That is one of the things that we are working on because the third dose rate is very important to ensure that we keep people as safe as possible. We have not made any decisions on this. Obviously, I realise that those people who are eligible to but have not had their third dose are probably not too happy about it, but at this point, we are trying to get people to get vaccinated because all the evidence shows, both here and overseas, that it saves lives.