



Hon Yvette D'Ath MP  
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Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
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Dear Mr <sup>Neil</sup> Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 3681-22, tabled in Parliament on 10 January 2022, in relation to COVID-19 treatment protocols.

In relation to how Queenslanders are able to access treatment for COVID-19, I can advise that Queensland Health has developed COVID-19 pathways that people or their carers are able to access where the person has received a positive COVID-19 test result or if they have symptoms and are concerned about their health and wellbeing (even without a test result). More information about how people are able to seek treatment advice is available on the Queensland Health website at: [Managing your symptoms - coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Health and wellbeing | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/Managing-your-symptoms-coronavirus-COVID-19-Health-and-wellbeing-Queensland-Government).

The models were developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders, including consumer representative groups. The aim of the model is to identify those people at high risk and ensure that they receive care in hospital as required. People are able to choose the method that best suits their circumstances. As part of the referral to appropriate care, treatment of COVID-19 for people that are confirmed as positive with COVID-19 will be determined on a case-by-case basis between the person and their treating clinician.

Queensland Health also currently has a range of guidelines for the access and the prescribing of COVID-19 treatment to ensure that those requiring administration of COVID-19 treatments are able to access these based on their clinical need.

In relation to post COVID-19 condition, or long COVID as it is also known, Queensland Health is progressing several initiatives to ensure patients with post COVID-19 condition receive appropriate treatment. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines post COVID-19 condition as the illness that occurs in people who have a history of probable or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection; usually within three months from the onset of COVID-19, with symptoms and effects that last for at least two months and where the symptoms and effects of post COVID-19 condition cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis.

The currently recognised symptoms, according to the WHO, include fatigue; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; memory, concentration or sleep problems; persistent cough; chest pain; trouble speaking; muscle aches; loss of smell or taste; depression or anxiety; and fever. Queensland Health is planning its future services, including its rehabilitation services and treatment pathways to take into account the impact of post COVID-19 condition. Queensland Health has developed a guideline to inform a system-wide response to assessing, treating and managing patients with post COVID-19 condition. The guidance will assist in system-wide consistency in the assessment and treatment of patients with post COVID-19 condition and guides better integration of care between the public health system and primary healthcare providers to ensure care is provided in the appropriate setting. Most patients with post COVID-19 condition can be successfully managed and treated in by primary healthcare providers in the community, rather than requiring treatment and management in hospitals.

In addition, through its response to the impacts of post COVID-19 condition, Queensland Health is improving the education and awareness of the condition among its clinicians and also for patients so that post COVID-19 condition can be better identified and managed, particularly in assisting patients to any treatments or exercises in their own homes (where symptoms relate to muscle aches or deconditioning). For more serious symptoms, patients are able to access care in hospital where required.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



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