

# COVID-19

# RURAL AND REMOTE RESPONSE

## Media release

1 April 2021

### **Easter travel? Don't put all your eggs in one basket!**

With COVID restrictions in the eastern states changing daily, make sure your Easter travel plans are flexible while remaining COVID cautious at all times.

That's the warning from the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), in the wake of the Brisbane coronavirus outbreak.

**"Australians have been reminded over the past week how quickly the virus can take hold and spread," RDAA President, Dr John Hall, said.**

"With cases of community transmission in Queensland and NSW, everyone needs to be prepared to change travel plans at the last minute, making sure you keep up-to-date with the requirements, not only in the state you are visiting but also what you will need to do when you get home.

"You may find that you now have to isolate at home, get a COVID test, or that borders may shut while you are away. Stay aware of these changes and requirements at all times and make sure you comply. Heavy fines apply for not following the health directives.

"We urge all Australians to ensure they are being COVID cautious when travelling over the Easter and school holiday period, and when socialising with family and friends.

"Please also continue to follow all COVID directions from the federal, state and territory governments, including checking-in at restaurants, shops and other venues using the relevant COVID app for your location."

The peak rural medical organisations are also urging Australians who are now eligible to receive the COVID vaccine to book in for their first dose as soon as possible, saying this is crucial in keeping them safe from serious illness should they contract COVID.

"While the vaccine rollout has commenced, we are still clearly in the middle of a major pandemic," Dr Hall said.

"If you are currently eligible to receive either a phase 1A or 1B COVID vaccine, and the vaccine is available in your area, please make an appointment and get it done – it will help protect you against getting seriously ill from COVID."

**ACRRM President, Dr Sarah Chalmers, said all Australians – even those in a small country town – must continue to do everything they can to stay COVID safe.**

"This means ensuring you are still doing all the 'tried and true' things you were doing at the start of the pandemic" **Dr Chalmers said.**

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“This includes:

- maintaining social distancing
- wearing a mask in places where social distancing may be difficult, or where masks are required
- covering your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing – by using a tissue or into your elbow
- regularly washing or sanitising your hands if you are out and about

“Critically, if you are feeling unwell with flu-like symptoms, please get tested and then self-isolate until you receive a negative test result,” Dr Chalmers said.

“Continuing to stay COVID safe is our best bet of avoiding further outbreaks of the virus, until such time that we are all fully vaccinated.”

Find more information on how to protect yourself, your family and community from COVID-19 by clicking [here](#).

Check on your eligibility to receive the COVID vaccine using the Australian Government’s [COVID Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#).

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A high resolution photo of RDAA President, Dr John Hall, is available here:

<https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/687>

A high resolution photo of ACRRM President, Dr Sarah Chalmers, is available here:

<https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/1291>

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