

COVID 19 RESPONSE ENQUIRY SUBMISSION

The Australian Government's response to COVID 19 pandemic was a debacle. National Cabinet was a joke. State Governments supposedly agreed to a national response and then did whatever suited them. Arbitrary lockdowns and COVID restrictions occurred on a State by State basis. There lacked any national consensus. Democratically elected representatives handed over responsibility to non-elected health officials. The only sensible Premier was Gladys Berejiklian who took reasonable measures to contain the pandemic in NSW while trying to do the least damage to the economy. All the other Premiers ran a fear mongering campaign of "Lock the State border" and you will be safe from COVID. Dan Andrews got the medal for the most locked down capital in the world.

State border closures meant people in regional areas could not obtain medical help if their doctors were in another State. So much for Medicare being a national health system. As Premier Palaszczuk said on norther NSW residents not allowed into Qld for medical care that Qld hospitals were for Qld people. I had a friend not being able to access her specialist in Brisbane on several occasions.


Misinformation was given by health departments that COVID vaccinations would stop people from getting COVID and spreading it to others. Many people lost their jobs because they refused to get a vaccination that had not been sufficiently trialled to ensure it was safe. This caused labour shortages in essential workers.

Elderly people in residential care were denied contact with family and many had to die in isolation. I have a friend in Qld whose mother with dementia was denied contact with family for months. Her mother was very distressed and kept asking why she was locked up because she had done nothing wrong. This was very hard emotionally on the family.

We are now seeing the fallout from extended school lockdowns on our children. Poor education outcomes and mental health issues. This was unnecessary as children unless they have another health issue generally don't die or become seriously ill with COVID.

While Job Keeper and payments to businesses affected by COVID was a good idea it needed to be better targetted and should have been income tested more thoroughly. States that crippled their economies with unnecessary extended lockdowns should have been financially penalised.

This Enquiry that excludes the States is a cop out. A Royal Commission is needed that looks at the Federal and State Government responses and a better National strategy prepared for the next pandemic.


12/12/23