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TRANSCRIPT: AMA QLD PRESIDENT PROFESSOR CHRIS PERRY INTERVIEW WITH LISA MILLAR ABC NEWS BREAKFAST

DATE: MONDAY 2 AUGUST 2021, 7AM

SUBJECT: COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN SOUTHEAST QUEENSLAND

LISA MILLAR: Interesting use of language this morning – it might be a three-day lockdown but it would seem that authorities are preparing Queenslanders for perhaps 14 days to get on top of this. What’s your sense of the situation?

CHRIS PERRY: Yes, that’s my sense. I think three days won’t be long enough. I’d be surprised if we’re back at the end of the week or this time next week. I think two weeks is probably what we’re looking at.

LISA MILLAR: Yeah, and when we’re looking at the numbers as well, interesting that five of the cases yesterday were among children aged 10 to 19. Delta’s certainly a different kind of strain, isn’t it? We’ve seen it in Melbourne and Sydney and now Queensland’s having to deal with it.

CHRIS PERRY: Yes, look, we saw it in India as well, that’s where it came from, and it seemed to go through very young people there, so we will need to look at our advice on Astra Zeneca over the next week or two for Queensland as well as in Sydney. So yeah, it’s a pretty awful disease. The good thing about it is we’ve got a vaccine and the vaccine seems to work very, very well.

LISA MILLAR: Yeah, when you talk about the advice in regards to Astra Zeneca and the vaccine, what do you think it should be?

CHRIS PERRY: Well, I think we follow the ATAGI advice and that is maybe not at the moment but gee, we’ve got millions of them, we’ve got many places where they can be given, they can be rolled out pretty quickly, and one dose seems to work quite well. So, we’ll just have to take it one day at a time, but I don’t think people should be too worried about which of the vaccines they get – they’re both very good and get whichever one you can when they’re available.

LISA MILLAR: Queensland’s interesting in that the vaccination rate there is lower than in other States. What do you put that down to?

CHRIS PERRY: Oh, it’s the same old vaccine hesitancy and especially outside of Brisbane people think they won’t get the disease. Now that we know that someone’s been to Rockhampton, maybe that will change. But I think we’re 37 per cent compared to NSW’s 41 per cent having had their first vaccination. Hesitancy rates in Australia are supposed to have dropped from 33 per cent down to 21 per cent over the last couple of weeks, so I think we’ll be able to get to the 80 per cent vaccination rate without too much effort, without too much mayhem, and without too many lockdowns of our community, which as you know are pretty awful.

LISA MILLAR: Yes, but you are expecting this to get worse. I mean, we heard from Jeannette Young, she's clearly very concerned about who else might be out in the community and doesn't know that they're carrying it.

CHRIS PERRY: Yes, one of the issues is that the two Grammar schools in Brisbane get pupils from all over south-east Queensland and they're very big schools, and the disease runs in children, by the looks, so we could have a real bad time, but hopefully not.

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