



31 August 2021

The Hon. Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: [PMinvites@pmc.gov.au](mailto:PMinvites@pmc.gov.au)

Dear Prime Minister,

### **National Plan for Re-opening Australia**

I am writing on behalf of more than 300,000 members, comprising nurses, midwives and care-workers, of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) to raise our significant concerns regarding the government's current proposed plan for re-opening Australia and transitioning the country's COVID-19 response based on the Doherty Institute's COVID-19 modelling and the Commonwealth Department of Treasury economic analysis.

The ANMF's Federal Council met 27 August 2021, and resolved to contact you and your government to raise our concerns and request that further, more detailed modelling and analysis is undertaken and considered by National Cabinet before any further moves to re-open the country are taken.

As you are aware, the nursing and midwifery workforces, as the largest and best distributed components of the health workforce, are fundamental to ensuring that the Australian community remains safe and healthy both during COVID outbreaks and as we seek to gradually move the nation beyond the current 'suppression phase' of the COVID-19 response.

This means that the impacts of re-opening and transitioning the country's national COVID-19 response prematurely without adequate planning or sufficient resourcing will disproportionately affect nurses and midwives and their capacity for ongoing delivery of quality care. The Doherty modelling, which currently underpins the government's proposed re-opening plan, fails to take account of all the factors affecting this capacity.

While the ANMF understands that National Cabinet is investigating further modelling, we are requesting that no further steps to re-opening are taken until the following factors have been fully considered:

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#### **ANMF Journals**

Australian Nursing and  
Midwifery Journal (ANMJ)

E [anmjadmin@anmf.org.au](mailto:anmjadmin@anmf.org.au)

W [www.anmj.org.au](http://www.anmj.org.au)

Australian Journal of  
Advanced Nursing (AJAN)

E [ajan@anmf.org.au](mailto:ajan@anmf.org.au)

W [www.ajan.com.au](http://www.ajan.com.au)

ABN 41 816 898 298



1. Current health system demand capacity, including expansion capacity, both critical care and general, and management of non COVID health demand;
2. Assessment of safe vaccination targets, which include the entire population, not just those currently eligible;
3. Vaccination rates needed for vulnerable populations, including those aged over 70 and other high risk groups;
4. Management of anticipated vaccination roll out channels for boosters once recommended;
5. The impact of the Delta and future variants, including on children, particularly in the context of uncontrolled community transmission as is currently occurring in NSW;
6. How the TTIQ workforce will be fully resourced and maintained without impacting the nursing and midwifery workforces; and
7. How to ensure that all communities across Australia will have equal access to safe health care as we progress through the pandemic.

The ANMF, as with most of the Australian community, is keen to transition the country's COVID-19 response from strict virus suppression to one of more relaxed restrictions. However, we cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that we do not make this transition until we can guarantee that vaccination rates and appropriate public health measures are sufficient to allow the health and aged care systems and their workforces to be able to continue to deliver best practice care to all those requiring it.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and the issues raised above. We are seeking your response to our members as a matter of urgency. If you require any further information or have any questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at [fedsec@anmf.org.au](mailto:fedsec@anmf.org.au)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annie Butler'.

Annie Butler  
Federal Secretary

cc.

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Leader of the Opposition  
The Hon. Daniel Andrews MP, Premier of Victoria  
The Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland  
The Hon. Gladys Berejilkian MP, Premier of New South Wales  
The Hon. Mark McGowan BA LLB MLA, Premier of Western Australia  
The Hon. Steven Marshall MP, Premier of South Australia  
The Hon. Peter Gutwein MP, Premier of Tasmania  
Mr. Andrew Barr MLA, Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory  
The Hon. Michael Gunner MLA, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory