

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



Transcript: AMA Vice President, Dr Chris Moy, Nine, *Today with Deborah Knight and Karl Stefanovic*, Wednesday, 16 September 2020

Subject: National consistency around border closures

KARL STEFANOVIC: Well, while NSW residents remain shut out of Queensland, Canberra's COVID bubble is growing this morning, with South Australia welcoming back residents of the ACT from today, despite the capital being deemed a hotspot by Queensland Health.

DEBORAH KNIGHT: Australian Medical Association Vice-President, Dr Chris Moy, joins us now for more on this. Doctor, thank you for joining us. Great news for the ACT, but in NSW, they'll have to wait a little bit longer before they can venture out.

CHRIS MOY: Good morning. Yeah, that's right. I mean, it's great for the ACT. What I'd say is that, given the current mess that exists with regards to lack of national agreement about hotspots and border traffic, there is some great sense that the ACT should be opened up because they haven't had a community transmission for something in the order of 10 weeks, whereas NSW still has some of those sort of cases bubbling up at the moment. So, there is some sense of a decision, and it's great that we can actually now travel to the ACT.

KARL STEFANOVIC: We just- I mean, that's breaking news. We just had a medical official saying- declaring, finally, that it is a hot mess between our borders at the moment. It really is. I mean, Queensland still declares the ACT a hotspot. Why differences of opinion in that medically?

CHRIS MOY: Look, I think that's the problem at the moment. I think what we're seeing at the moment, in every sense of it, is that there's this inconsistency about what the goal is, what the hotspot definitions are, and border traffic rules. Really, where we need to get to, and I think the AMA is coming to that point, we need some national agreement so the States can start transacting, like banks, in terms of being able to make rules that are consistent so that there isn't this, nationwide, what appears to be a mess. People are just scratching their heads at the moment about why one State has one lot of rules and the others don't.

DEBORAH KNIGHT: What do you make of the reports this morning that Queensland is considering softening the strict conditions that they have to reopen NSW, reducing the amount of days for the cases, halving it in effect?

CHRIS MOY: Well, that would put it in line with South Australia, which is 14 days of no community spread before opening it up, which is why they haven't opened up to NSW at this stage. That would actually bring it into line, and that's what we need. We need that national discussion. And there has been some politics involved, and there has been inconsistency of messaging. And I think the country needs this, just to get back to a team as a country, where we can actually start to make decisions that start to make sense.

DEBORAH KNIGHT: How good is that? A plain-speaking medic.

KARL STEFANOVIC: Thank you, Doctor. Appreciate it.

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CONTACT: Maria Hawthorne 02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753