



## **The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**

Minister for Health

# **TRANSCRIPT**

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### **PRESS CONFERENCE CANBERRA**

*E&OE...*

*Topics: COVIDSafe app launch*

#### **GREG HUNT:**

Welcome, everybody to this afternoon's briefing on coronavirus. I'm joined by the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy; the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer of the Commonwealth, Alison McMillan; the National Secretary of the Nursing and Midwifery Federation of Australia, Annie Butler; the National President of the Australian Medical Association, Tony Bartone; and the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Health, Daniel Keys.

Today is about continued progress in saving lives and protecting lives from coronavirus. It's about supporting our magnificent doctors and nurses, pharmacists, allied health workers, aged care workers and carers. It's also about thanking them.

And to be joined by Annie and Tony on behalf of our nurses and doctors, and our entire medical community is a real privilege. And on behalf of the nation, I want to say thank you to all of our health workers – you are our frontline, you are our carers and protectors and you have helped Australia through the COVID-19 pandemic.

And the position we are in is because of the partnership between the Australian people, and the Australian government, but perhaps above all else because of the extraordinary work of our doctors and nurses and all of our health and medical workers.

In particular, today, as part of our work in supporting those doctors and nurses we will be releasing the CovidSafe app, and the CovidSafe app is about assisting, finding those cases which might be undiagnosed in the community, helping people get earlier treatment, helping people to have earlier diagnosis, and to ensure that our doctors and nurses, our health workers, our families and our friends are protected - and that will save lives and protect lives.

In particular, let me begin by a brief update with regards to containment and capacity. So containment is about bringing down the rate of growth of cases in Australia, and capacity is about improving the strength and resilience of our health system in the face of what has been the most difficult time for this nation since the Second World War.

In terms of containment, this week we reaffirmed through the National Security Committee and the Prime Minister in particular, the restrictions on entry into Australia and exit from Australia - our border protection remains our first line of defence. Secondly, with regards to testing we have now reached over half a million tests in Australia.

Prior to coming to this room the briefing from the National Incident Centre is that there have been over 506,000 coronavirus tests completed in Australia - not just one of the highest rates in the world but - as the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine affirmed - their analysis is that it is the most accurate case ascertainment rate of the 83 countries they assessed across the world.

In terms of tracing, today is about supporting the work of our public health officials in the states, finding those people who may have been exposed, giving them the opportunity to be tested, and, if found positive, diagnosed to help protect their lives and the lives of all of those with whom they may have come into contact.

In terms of our distancing and isolation, I do want to say thank you to Australians. These are the hardest of times but you have been magnificent as a country. The world has looked at Australia and said what a country, in its best sense of a unified society, of a unified community, of a single Australian family and it has been an extraordinary thing to be a part of, but just that immense sense of national cohesion which has emerged.

As a result of all of these things, what we have seen is a sustained, consolidated and now extended flattening of the curve. What that means in practical terms is that there were 16 cases to 6:30am this morning, there have now been 6,711 cases all up and, sadly, 83 lives lost.

In particular though, I do want to release this data - in the last seven days there have been 117 cases, this compares with the previous seven days where there were 297 cases. So 117 cases in the last 17 days diagnosed as positive, 297 cases in the week before.

We have now had an average increase in case numbers of less than 1 per cent for 15 consecutive days, and an average increase in case numbers of less than half a per cent for seven consecutive days. All of these things mean we are doing well as a nation, but we haven't won yet - so we are winning, but we haven't won.

There are still cases of outbreaks and different states and territories are doing a great job in getting on top of those outbreaks. But today is about assisting them. In terms of our capacity we have worked together - and in particular, Tony, I want to thank you and all of the doctors in Australia in terms of telehealth - we have now had over 5.4 million telehealth consultations.

In our aged care sector we have had difficult outcomes in some cases, but nationally an extraordinary result in containing cases. And in our hospitals we've achieved our ventilator capacity that we sought. And we struck the agreement to protect and support our nurses both in public and in private hospitals and, Annie, I want to thank you and all the nurses for your work.

With regards to recovery, we have three critical elements that we're working towards. Firstly is to expand the testing capacity, and Professor Murphy may say more on that, but we are making good progress.

Secondly, our rapid response capability and we've seen in north-west Tasmania an example, which is exactly what we would want, of rapid response and containment - less than 1 per cent increase per day over the last three days in Tasmania, 22 cases in Tasmania over the last seven days. So they've had an outbreak, they responded, and they've contained.

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And then finally, what we need to do is to ensure that there is tracing and that tracing is about helping to find cases in the community. Now, public health officials have been doing that manually and today we're expanding that capacity with the COVIDSafe app. I'll briefly explain its purpose and how it operates.

In terms of its purpose, it's very simple – it's to protect our nurses and our doctors, our families, our friends and ourselves, by providing early notification if we have been in contact with somebody who may have been diagnosed as positive with coronavirus.

And it is very possible that we would never know, and there are over 500 cases in Australia where we've never found the original source. And it may be that two people have been standing in a line and one of them had accidentally been a little bit close, they might have been on public transport.

Their names are not known and you would not be able to find that person and notify them that they're at risk. And they, in turn, might be in contact with a doctor or nurse - and that is how an infection can get into an aged care centre, or a hospital, or some other form of health environment.

So, against that background the Australian Government, in partnership with the medical community, has established the COVIDSafe app. And what it does is that it assists in the early alert and finding of people who may have been in contact with a person that is positive with a diagnosis.

How does it work? Very simply, download the app from your App Store – it could be the Google App Store, it could be Apple App Store - subsequently register from 6pm today, you then have your app open, it provides a Bluetooth handshake. It sits on your phone in terms of the data - that data is encrypted, no-one has access to it, not even yourself, no Commonwealth officials.

If you are diagnosed then you already have voluntary consent for downloading the app but you are asked a second time - only a state public health official can be given access to that data, and only after you have then consented for a second time. Its then- your details of whom you have been in contact with for more than 15 minutes, with less than 1.5m distance, will then be provided.

In terms of privacy, no person can access what's on their phone, no other person can access what's on your phone. It is also prohibited by law - I have already signed into law, on behalf of the government, a Biosecurity Act Determination which prevents access, which ensures that the data has to be kept on an Australian server.

It cannot leave the country, it cannot be accessed by anybody other than a state public health official, it cannot be used for any purpose other than the provision of data for the purposes of finding people with whom you have been in close contact, and it is punishable by jail if there is a breach of that.

There's no geolocation, there is no Commonwealth access and, as I said, it's stored in Australia. Importantly the data is deleted from your phone after 21 days. It's been assessed by the Privacy Commissioner and there are only four things that are required from the individual – obviously, your phone number, your name, your age range, and your postcode.

Significantly, we have worked with the medical profession and the medical profession has released a joint statement with the government today; and that includes - and I'll just read them in alphabetical order - the support and encouragement for people to download the app of the Allied Health Professions of Australia, the Australian College of Nursing, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, the Australian Dental Association, the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the Council of Medical College Presidents of Australia representing all of the medical colleges, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled

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and Health Organisation, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Rural Australian College of Physicians, the Royal Australian College of GPs and the Rural Doctors Association of Australia.

What that means is today is about supporting and protecting our health professionals, our nurses, and our doctors, and everybody who is taking care of us. It is about taking care of our families and taking care of ourselves and it will help us as we seek to return to normal and the Australian way of life. I want to thank Australians, thank our health professionals and encourage every Australian to look to download and register for the app.

I might ask, James, if we can show the short video for Australians to explain the COVIDSafe app.

[Promotional video plays]

**GREG HUNT:**

And on that, I'll introduce the Chief Medical Officer here in Canberra.

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

Thanks Minister. So as Minister Hunt has said, we have flattened our curve, we are in a pretty good place at the moment.

I've been given a task, along with my public health colleagues, by the National Cabinet to convince the National Cabinet that we have the world's best public-health response system, before they can even consider any potential relaxation of any of the distancing measures that they have agreed to look at over coming weeks.

The reason we need the world's best public health response system is because this virus is so infectious. We know that there are small amounts of this virus circulating in our communities. Very small in the numbers that the Minister has been telling us.

But we also know that it is so infectious it can take off really quickly, as we saw in north-west Tasmania, as we have seen in other outbreaks. We've seen, unfortunately, in a couple of aged care facilities. So, we have to be in a position where we can detect and respond as early as possible to any infections and that requires a number of things. It requires increased testing.

We've already expanded the testing across Australia to anybody who has acute respiratory symptoms, and we encourage again anybody with a cough or a cold - go and get tested. Ring your GP or go to one of the testing clinics and get tested. So we want a lot more testing.

We're also going to be testing people who are asymptomatic - what we call sentinel testing with properly sampled. We've just been talking about using healthcare workers as maybe one of the places - health and aged care workers because they are in the front line.

But we also need to support the several thousand wonderful, wonderful disease detectives in our public health units who do contact tracing. So, when someone tests positive, they contact them - and at the moment there's a very manual process - where they find out who they've been in contact with, ask for their phone numbers, ring up those people, talk to them - that can be a very laborious, manual process.

What this app does, is just helps them with that process. It automates it to some extent, it helps in getting the numbers, it helps people who might have forgotten who they've been in contact with. It also means, as the Minister said, that there may be people that you've been in contact with for the

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period of time that makes you a contact, you don't even know who they are - so we don't have to go and say 'anyone who was in this place, on this day please let us know' - because we will know.

The public health officials that I represent through AHPPC and our broader advice have been very, very supportive of this app. But they've also been very, very keen to make sure that all of those protections that the Minister has put in place means that no Australian should have any concerns about downloading this app.

It is only for one purpose, to help contact tracing if someone becomes positive - that is all it's for, all it will be used for. And it's going to be one of those things that if we have good uptake, really high uptake across the community, that will make me in a strong- put me in a stronger position to convince the National Cabinet that that's one of the elements of us having the world 's best public health response system.

There's a lot of other things as part of that, but this will be a key element to it. So I'm going to download it and register tonight. I know that all of my colleagues in the public health field are going to too. Thanks, Minister.

**GREG HUNT:**

I'll invite Alison McMillan, the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer. And then Tony Bartone, President of the AMA. And then Annie Butler to speak on behalf of Australia's nurses.

**ALISON MCMILLAN:**

Thank you, Minister. I echo also the message of Professor Murphy and the Minister that this is something we're asking everyone to do. And you see here today the enormous support that's coming from the Nurse and Midwifery Federation, and the Australian Medical Association, and all of the professional bodies out there.

We're encouraging all Australians to take their part in contributing to the continuation of the magnificent work that we have seen done in Australia, but we need to continue that. And, as we've heard, the world 's best public-health system needs your support too.

So, this is how you can do your part to help us, help defeat this and get ourselves back to our normal Australian life. So, on behalf of all the health professionals, but particularly nurses and midwives, I ask you to take your part.

You have heard the outline about how your privacy will be protected and what this means for you, and so please download that app this evening and be a part of the response to this COVID-19. Thank you.

**GREG HUNT:**

Tony Bartone. And can I just echo our thanks again for the work of our extraordinary doctor's right across Australia.

**TONY BARTONE:**

And thank you very much, Minister. The launch of the COVIDSafe app is an important responsibility and an important call on the nation. As a doctor I will be downloading COVIDSafe app tonight. I will be recommending it to my patients, to my friends and families, and to my colleagues.

As Australia's leading medical organisation the AMA will be encouraging all of the community to do the same. The COVIDSafe app will assist in automating part of that contact tracing process - that laborious slow process which, together with the marvellous community response, has been

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implicitly responsible for reducing the spread of COVID-19 in the community and flattening the curve - but it is a laborious and slow process.

So, as we now start to look at what life may look like coming out of these social distancing restrictions, we need to have the confidence and indeed the knowledge that both- that everything that can be done is being done.

So, just let me first of all reiterate - we are in the early phases of dealing with COVID-19. We've been really successful so far in dealing with the impact, and indeed, limiting that spread. But as we move out we need to ensure that that spread can be contained and this will give the community the confidence to do- to move forward accordingly.

Privacy, technical and other practical issues need to be assured in the rollout, and of course any challenges need to be anticipated and prevented. But the app is voluntary. The app can only be used for the purposes that it was designed - for the COVID-19 contact tracing, to assist our contact tracers in doing their diligent work.

It can be deleted at any time by anyone who downloads the app. And indeed the information will be deleted at the end of the COVID-19 period. So, that is an important part of the process. So, the community now has been marvellous in their uptake in terms of the social distancing measures and the restrictions.

We now ask the community to take up this next challenge in assisting how we, as a community, can all come out of COVID-19 and indeed lift those social distancing measures, those restrictions, and get on with life as we once knew it.

Minister, may I also take the opportunity of thanking you and your government for the two important announcements previously addressed, that is the telehealth measure and the return of private elective surgery this coming Tuesday.

General practice is indeed open, and face-to-face consults are safe and available. But for some members of the community that's not an option and telehealth has been an allowance to ensure that continuity of care. But we need to stress, care- usual care needs to continue.

Heart attack, strokes, diabetes, cancers do not take a holiday because of a circulating COVID-19 virus, and the message to Australians is to continue their usual care and see a doctor for whatever symptoms are unusual and not pre-expected in their process. Don't write it off, it might be your health that you are putting off.

And secondly, the return to private elective surgery, the gradual return of that process – that's an important additional component in ensuring that we deal with the necessary burden of disease now and do not defer and roll out a significant hump of unexpectedly complications in that- managing those conditions as we reach the end of the COVID-19.

So, thank you very much, Minister.

**GREG HUNT:**

And I'll invite Annie Butler, the National Secretary of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation. And, Annie, just to equally echo our thanks to our extraordinary nurses.

We know overseas that many nurses have been on the front line and been put at great risk. Our nurses are courageous, they're compassionate and they are just the best of Australia, along with all of the health workers.

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**ANNIE BUTLER:**

Thanks very much, Minister, and I'm not quite sure I could've put it better myself. But the Federation is here to support the launch of the COVIDSafe app today as an additional tool in Australia's public health response in managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

We think there are a number of things that are important to note. The app is voluntary, it's voluntary so people who do still feel concerned about it do not need to participate. The app is not intended as a panacea - it is an additional measure, along with all the other measures that have been put in place and will continue to be put in place to manage the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia.

It's very important, as has been said by my colleagues before, we're continuing to expand testing, we're continuing to introduce other measures that make sure Australia stays as safe as we possibly can.

The third thing is that I do want to thank, as the Minister has said, we really do want to thank Australians, the majority of Australians who really have pulled together and managed to all participate in the social distancing, and the other tough measures that we've had to put in place - it's not been easy, it's been very hard.

But when we're all together, and the stronger we do it together, the better it is. And, as the Minister said, it is most definitely better for our nurses, midwives, doctors and all other healthcare workers because the better you can do for us, and the better you can stay at home, do all the other things to protect us, the better we can be at work and protecting you.

And the last thing I want to say is I'm a registered nurse, I'm no technical expert at all, but my understanding that this operates by a Bluetooth handshake, and right now, it's the only safe handshake we're allowed to have.

Thanks very much.

**GREG HUNT:**

Fantastic. And I'll just invite Brendan back and then- I will just say that I'll be downloading the app because it will help protect our nurses and our doctors, and help protect my family and other families.

And, in fact, as we have been here I've just been informed that, ahead of time the app is in the Google Store already and will be in the Apple Store shortly, again ahead of time, and ready for registration from 6pm tonight.

Happy to take any questions. Michelle?

**JOURNALIST:**

Mr Hunt, the government has done some research in the run-up to the presentation of this app. What has that told you about the community likely baseline support for it, from which you're now working to try to increase that?

**GREG HUNT:**

So there have been a number of studies that have been published. I understand that the Group of Eight published their work, and there is nothing different that the government's had; that people are very supportive of the idea of assisting our tracing, but they always want to make sure that their data was safe and private.

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What we've done is actually strip back the function so as there's one job, and one job alone, and that is if you are positive, to be able to make that available only to the state public health authorities, with nobody else having access and to make sure it is voluntary. Even the Australia Institute has indicated that there was very strong support.

I spoke with the Director, Richard Dennis, this morning who indicated to me that he would be downloading the app. And, you know, from time to time, Richard and the Australia Institute will have differences of opinion with the government, and he said he was very supportive of it and that I could quote him to that effect. Greg?

**JOURNALIST:**

I understand you can use a pseudonym or a fake name to register with the app. Would you recommend that people use their real name? Or does it not really matter?

And secondly, Dr Murphy, with the uptake - just following on from what Michelle said - will the- for you to go to National Cabinet and say this has been- there's been a high uptake of this, this will help us track the virus if we ease social restrictions, what will that baseline level need to be?

People sort of crab walked back from the 40 per cent mark a bit. But what level can you say now that, of uptake would give you the confidence that it is a high level?

**GREG HUNT:**

Okay. So just in terms of your first question, Greg, yes you can - that's legally available. This is about making sure that anybody who has been in contact with somebody that's diagnosed is able to be notified to protect them.

And what we want to do is make sure that that contact is there, so a name helps. Obviously it's better, I think, if it's exactly who you are. But above all else we want to be able to be in contact, for the state health officials to be in contact.

Just before Brendan answers, more generally this is part of all of the measures where we've got down to less than half a per cent growth a day, but it's going to assist us going forward.

So there's no magic figure, but every set of people that download will make it easier and help us find those otherwise undiagnosed cases of community transmission. Brendan?

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

So, the Minister's right - it's part of a package. The public health response measure consists of a range of things. The stronger the uptake, the stronger the case. There are obviously a lot of other elements to it, so there's no magic number.

I am very confident though that we will get good uptake. I have seen really good uptake of distancing measures - good uptake, in my mind, would be well over half the people. And I reckon we'll get it, because I think Australians will rise to the challenge, because they have risen to the challenge of distancing, they've risen to the challenge of testing.

We are one of the best countries in the world in our response and that's because of our people. All Australians want to know is that this app is safe, their privacy is protected, it's used for that purpose. We have- this is bolted on security. I think they'll take it up.

**GREG HUNT:**

Okay, Claire. Sorry, one, two.

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**JOURNALIST:**

Minister, what is your message to Australians who still have lingering concerns about their privacy - whether it be who can access the data? Or similar concerns?

**GREG HUNT:**

So, firstly it's voluntary because we believe in that. Secondly, this is, as the Attorney-General has said, probably the safest data that has been provided by any group at any time in Australian history.

It is the most basic of data, it's simply about helping to save your life, to protect your life and to protect the lives of our nurses and doctors, and those with whom they come in contact. The safeguards that have been put in place are the strongest ever.

Not even a court order can penetrate the law, not even a court order during the investigation of an alleged crime would be allowed to be used. So there has, to the best of our knowledge, never been a set of protections like those which have been put in place under law for this app.

**JOURNALIST:**

Professor Murphy, this app effectively digitises a process that was happening manually anyway. Can you speak to the health benefits in terms of how long contact tracing may have taken manually? And what those extra days could do in terms of limiting the spread?

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

Thanks, that's a really good question. So, particularly for someone who's had a lot of contacts it can sometimes take many hours, even days to find out a, who they were, and then to chase them down, find out their contact information.

What this will do is will give a list of the mobile phone numbers of those people who have been in contact within that distance, for 15 minutes or more. And that will enable the public health worker to cross check those with the person who's tested positive, but also to identify people that the positive person may not have even known the identity of.

They can then sit down with those numbers and ring them up, and say you were in contact with someone who has tested positive in the period when they may have been infectious and we would like you to take steps to protect yourself and your family.

So that could lead to someone being contacted a day or two earlier than they otherwise might have been, and in that day or two if they happen to have been infectious they could have infected a lot of people. So it can have a really good benefit.

**GREG HUNT:**

Okay. Sam?

**JOURNALIST:**

Just in terms of- there's obviously a few teething problems with iPhones - a few moments ago I still couldn't download it for an iPhone. What are the issues in terms of you needing not to have your screen locked? Have your screen locked? Too many apps open? How that affects it?

And also, while you've said that this data cannot be subpoenaed, or cannot be used by police. If you uncover what is clearly, you know, gatherings of too many people that have occurred, what happens with that?

Are you saying there is some sort of amnesty for people that are busted having a house party at Bondi under this app? How will the information be used?

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**GREG HUNT:**

Sure, just in terms of the second part – can't be used for any other purpose. It's prevented, by law, from being used for any other purpose and to use it for any other purpose is punishable by jail.

And I think that that's a very important protection. That may, in some ways, diminish what some might have wanted. But as a Cabinet we considered all of the possibilities and we said one job, one use - to protect Australians from the spread of coronavirus and it has no other purpose, and nor is it legally able to be used for any other purpose.

In terms of the app, as I said, it's already available on the Google App Store, on Apple it will be available before the 6pm registration time begins and that will be ahead of schedule. And in relation to what's called signal strength, essentially we encourage you to, obviously, have it on.

But if you have other items, if your phone is locked, or if you have other apps running - unlike the original version which was put out in Singapore, because we had the benefit of seeing what had occurred in Singapore - Daniel and his colleagues have been able to work to ensure that that's not an issue in Australia.

But where there are, like every app, additional strengths- strengthening's which are developed to be able to improve the capacity with signal strength. We know that Apple, around the world, is working on that and we will provide those upgrades and updates as well.

**JOURNALIST:**

(Inaudible) information will be stored? And what defences you've put around it?

**GREG HUNT:**

So, the information is encrypted and on your phone – it's not on anybody else's phone. I can't find what's on my phone, I can't find out what's on anybody else's phone, the government can't find out what's on your phone.

And so there are physical barriers and then there are legal barriers. And then it's only if you are diagnosed as positive, contacted by a public health official at the state level - the disease detectives, as Brendan's described them - that you then have a choice.

It's up to you whether you then release the information on your app, in which case it's encoded, and encrypted, and sent to the national data store which is a server here in Australia. And then it can only be accessed by the authorised state public health official.

**JOURNALIST:**

Minister, just following up on that - with the state authority, how long would they hold that data?

And, Brendan Murphy, I could ask you, I know that we've had a lot of messages about schools, but would you be encouraging schools that, as of habit, take phones away from their students, to actually allow the students to hold those phones during school hours to protect the health of fellow students and teachers?

**GREG HUNT:**

You go first.

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

So, I think there is a balance there. As I said on many occasions, Andrew, where - and I think you will be pleased to see the release of the New South Wales health study on schools today that we

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don't think transmission is occurring a lot in schools and, obviously, kids handing phones around can be a source of contamination as well.

So I that's a- that's probably a balancing act in schools. We are not pushing the uptake of this app by school children as much as adults. So the people who are transmitting in our community are particularly younger adults, or adults and that's our main target.

**GREG HUNT:**

Daniel, would you like to answer the particular question? The state arrangements are governed by an agreement with the state. No state can access the data unless they accept the conditions. Yep, Daniel?

**DANIEL KEYS:**

So, once the state official has conducted the contact trace then that data will be deleted at the end of the pandemic. Now, because we're not aware of the length of time that will be, we've put a review point on at six months so that we're able to then make an assessment at that time as to which data will be deleted.

**GREG HUNT:**

And at that point all that they have are the contact details from the person with whom a diagnosed individual has been in contact. Chris. Sorry.

**JOURNALIST:**

Minister Hunt, it's been suggested that if this app was this important in terms of our response that potentially it would have been mandated. Could you go into the government's decision about why you chose to make it not a compulsory app?

And also, potentially for Professor Murphy, overnight the World Health Organization has warned governments against the use of immunity passports because of a lack of evidence of the virus not being able to be contracted by the same person twice.

What's the Australian Government's understanding of this at the moment?

**GREG HUNT:**

Sure, so in terms of mandating it we didn't believe that that was appropriate for Australia. We didn't think that that would be acceptable to the Australian public and it wasn't acceptable to us.

The Prime Minister was absolutely clear from the outset, that this had to be voluntary app and that is why we have also ruled out as being used for what you might call a passport. Now, there are two different types, there's testing for antibodies which the Chief Medical Officer will deal with, or the possibility that an app could be required for entry into a premises - that is illegal.

We have specifically passed, as part of the Biosecurity Determination, a provision which makes it illegal for anybody to require you to download, to use, or to maintain the app. So we made a judgement based on two things - values, and Australian character. Values that we did not believe it was appropriate for a government to mandate that.

We've been fortunate, through the relationship with the states and the virus to develop this incredible Australian relationship and partnership and making it mandatory would have breached that partnership.

And I've got to say, right from the outset the PM said we're only doing this if it's voluntary. And equally though, we've gone further and said that no person can require you to download it.  
Brendan?

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

Yeah. So on the issue of immunity passports I would agree with the World Health Organization - it's still too early to know whether antibodies detected by serology - which is still in development - do represent permanent lifelong immunity.

We just don't know that. We do know that some people have recovered and have continued to have detectable virus - we don't know what that means. We don't know whether they're infectious. We know that most people after the virus do have antibodies, we don't know how long they'll last or how long the protection will last.

So it is too early to use immunity passports, I would agree.

**GREG HUNT:**

Now, in the interest of public health and safety I won't keep this press conference going too long. I will take one, which is Mark.

**JOURNALIST:**

Just away from the app – the head of Cricket Australia has said that the government's considering border exemptions to allow international teams to come into Australia for the T-20 World Cup, which is later in the year.

Can you confirm that? And also, what sort of conditions will need to be met to allow these international teams to come into Australia?

**GREG HUNT:**

Sure. It's not something I've been a part of, so I don't have any detail. I will say though - and I'll let Brendan deal with it - that the National Cabinet, on the advice of the medical expert panel set out a process for considering not just professional sport, but community sport.

And one thing that we wanted to do was make sure that professional and community sport went forwards together - that the same rules and conditions applied to both. Brendan?

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

So, the Health Protection Principal Committee will be considering later this week some proposals from major sporting codes to consider what would be the parameters upon which the National Cabinet may feel that it's safe to let them recommence crowd-free matches.

There's a long way to go, we haven't seen their proposals yet and I can assure you that there would need to be a lot of safeguards - particularly if it was talking about teams coming from a country with a high rate of transmission.

That would be a concern and we would obviously need to mitigate that. And there are mitigations that could be in place, but it's very early in this process.

**JOURNALIST:**

Professor, just on aged care - you were on a webinar on Friday night with the Aged Care Minister, Richard Colbeck, and aged care providers. What were some of the concerns raised by them? And will any changes come as a result?

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

**BRENDAN MURPHY:**

So, I think the aged care providers, they- we were concerned, National Cabinet expressed concern that some residents were being denied access to their family and visitors, and have been done so for a long time.

The aged care providers, I think, want an acknowledgement - which Minister Colbeck and I provided – that they were clearly doing that in what they saw as the best interests of the residents and obviously they were concerned.

And I think we had a good discussion that there may well be some circumstances where visits should be completely stopped - for example, if there's an outbreak in a facility or if there's a significant outbreak in the community around that facility.

But in a situation like we have in Australia, where there are some states and territories with- had very few cases at all, they all agreed that it is not reasonable to completely deny access to very safely screened visitors for a short period of time and that everyone coming into a facility needs to be screened.

So it was a good discussion. I think they had felt that the National Cabinet was blaming them a bit and the National Cabinet wasn't blaming them - it was just pointing out that we have to think about the psychological needs of those residents, and they need to have access to their family, and it can be made safe.

**JOURNALIST:**

What's your response to Western Australia and Queensland easing some restrictions today? And would that be better if it was done on a nationwide basis?

**GREG HUNT:**

All the states and territories are operating within the National Cabinet framework and they're using the baseline set by the Cabinet. And where they feel - and this was how the Cabinet was always intended to work - where they feel that the local circumstances are such that they may be able to make changes and provide more freedoms to people within that, then that's a good thing.

And I couldn't be more pleased for people in those states. This is the result of the success we've had as a nation in helping to flatten the curve. And I do want to finish by saying all the things we have done as a nation have helped flatten the curve.

Downloading the app is one more thing we can do to help flatten the curve, to help protect our nurses and doctors, our friends, and our families, and ourselves and to help us on the pathway back to doing the things we love to do as a nation. Thank you.

**-ENDS-**