



Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance  
Services  
Minister for Women

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Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliament  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 3948-23, tabled in Parliament on 28 November 2023.

I am advised COVID-19 related deaths for each state and territory are published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) COVID-19 Mortality in Australia. The number of deaths is reported by state or jurisdiction where the death was registered, and where COVID-19 was either the underlying cause of death or contributed to death. Total number of deaths are published by year and quarter. At the time of writing, deaths were reported up to 30 September 2023 and that data had been updated on the 27 October 2023.

The ABS and Queensland Health (QH) source death data from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM) and, as such, the ABS published data does not differ from that collected by QH. Deaths are not published by QH for any notifiable disease, except during a public health emergency, and the reporting of death data is not a legal requirement under the Public Health Act (2005).

I am also advised the identity of the public website referred to by the petitioners as having published seven deaths since the week ending 14 July 2023 has not been disclosed. Queensland Health has no role with the administration of any public website and does not directly provide data for any public website.

I am advised there may be a delay to process all information for a single death, which includes the preparation of a death certificate, the coroner's involvement as required, and administration by the RBDM before being notified to external organisations. An individual who is notified today to the ABS to have died with COVID-19, may have a deceased date weeks or months prior. As such, very few deaths with a deceased date in recent weeks are notified by the RBDM and made available for publication.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Ryan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**The Honourable Mark Ryan MP**

Acting Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services

Acting Minister for Women