

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LONG COVID SUPPORT AUSTRALIA EXPRESSES CONCERNS OVER QUEENSLAND CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER'S  
VIEWS ON LONG COVID**

Long COVID Support Australia, an organisation advocating for the welfare and support of individuals suffering from Long COVID, expresses its deep concern over recent comments made by Queensland's Chief Health Officer, Dr. John Gerrard, regarding the term "Long COVID" and its implications. While we acknowledge the importance of diverse perspectives in the medical community, we believe it is crucial to address the potential impact such statements can have on the mental health and well-being of Long COVID patients.

Long COVID, also known as post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC), is a term widely used to describe a range of persistent symptoms experienced by individuals after recovering from COVID-19. The name "Long COVID" was chosen by patients themselves early on in the pandemic, as they sought to capture the enduring nature of their symptoms and the unique challenges they faced during their recovery journey. Patients, driven by their shared experiences, embraced the name "Long COVID" to create a sense of solidarity and to give their condition a recognisable identity.

Long COVID Support Australia recognises that Long COVID is a complex and debilitating condition that affects a significant number of individuals worldwide. Today, on International Long COVID Awareness Day, our organisation, along with Australian Long COVID patients, had planned numerous events aimed at raising awareness, fostering hope, and seeking understanding from the broader public and media. Unfortunately, Dr. Gerrard's comments have inadvertently overshadowed these efforts, causing distress and undermining the collective spirit of this important day.

We understand the need for ongoing research and scientific discourse surrounding Long COVID. However, it is crucial to approach this matter with sensitivity and empathy, considering the experiences of those grappling with the long-lasting effects of COVID-19. While Dr. Gerrard's study may present a different perspective, it is essential to highlight that there are larger, more inclusive studies that have indicated the severity and distinctiveness of Long COVID compared to post-viral issues arising from other respiratory illnesses like the flu.

Long COVID Support Australia firmly believes in fostering a supportive and compassionate environment for individuals affected by Long COVID. We encourage open dialogue and collaboration between medical professionals, researchers, and patient advocacy groups to ensure a comprehensive understanding of this condition and the provision of appropriate care and support for those in need.

As an organisation committed to the well-being of Long COVID patients, we urge all stakeholders, including health authorities, policymakers, and the media, to approach discussions around Long COVID with the utmost care, considering the potential impact on patients' mental health and overall quality of life. It is crucial to provide accurate information, raise awareness, and promote empathy and understanding to positively contribute to the well-being of those affected by Long COVID.

Long COVID Support Australia remains dedicated to supporting individuals with Long COVID, their families, and caregivers, providing resources and access to vital support networks.

**Media**

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