

Australia says it is well prepared for mounting COVID-19 cases

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Sydney, December 19 (RHC)-- Australian officials on Sunday said there was no need to clamp down on Christmas festivities even as new COVID-19 infections climbed in Sydney, with the country's high vaccination rate helping keep people out of hospital.

Health Minister Greg Hunt said he was confident Australia would not need to follow the Netherlands, which has reimposed a strict lockdown over the Christmas and New Year period to curb the spread of the highly contagious Omicron variant.

“We’re going into summer, we have one of the highest vaccination rates in the world and a very different set of circumstances. So we don’t see that’s a likely situation in Australia,” Hunt told reporters in a televised media conference.

“We’re well prepared and people are overwhelmingly ... continuing to do an amazing job,” Hunt said, referring to the more than 90% of Australians over 16 who have been fully vaccinated.

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