

TIGER C19

Timely Integration of User
Generated Responses about C19

Introduction and Approach

WHAT: TIGER C19 is an ongoing collaboration between the Burnet Institute and the University of Melbourne that combines big data analytics of social media postings with qualitative research methods.

WHY: TIGER C19 can inform public health and health information responses by examining local COVID-19-related issues of current interest as both a supplement and complement to other research (notably the longitudinal Optimise study). The focus is on Melbourne and Victoria, though the emerging themes have broader resonance and application to other jurisdictions in Australia and overseas.

HOW: Using a sophisticated data analytics tool, TIGER C19 extracts posts containing selected key words and themes from two social media platforms – Reddit and Twitter – that are then subjected to thematic analyses.

Summary of results

Table 1 below summarises findings for the key words, focusing on the top 20 URLs and the most popular upvoted (Reddit) or retweeted (Twitter) posts using the following key words: **appointment, vaccine, vaccination, hesitancy/hesitant, lockdown, quarantine.**

Data collection: 16 July – 27 July 2021

Total number of hits/posts: 78,763

Table 1: Summary of Reddit and Twitter ‘captures’ by key words

Key word	Hits
Appointment	Reddit: 231 hits
	Twitter: 2,501 hits
Hesitancy/Hesitant	Reddit: 217 hits
	Twitter: 2,286 hits

Key word	Hits
Lockdown	Reddit: 5,675 hits
	Twitter: 17,997 hits
Vaccination/Vaccine	Reddit: 4,396 hits
	Twitter: 28,875 hits
Quarantine	Reddit: 1,103 hits
	Twitter: 15,482 hits

Emerging themes

We analysed the most popular posts (and repost trails) to determine emerging key themes.

1. Highlighting Federal Government failures in quarantine and vaccinations

- Gov has mismanaged vaccine roll out/ supply
- Comparing Australia's vaccine roll out to other countries
- Federal government is responsible for ongoing lockdowns
- Federal government should develop alternative to hotel quarantine
- Don't vote LNP in the next election

2. Government, health, and media messaging about vaccinations

- Political mixed messaging has created vaccine hesitancy in the community
- Government's scare tactic advertisement is unfair to those who cannot access vaccination/ may increase hesitancy
- Sky News / Murdoch / Alan Jones media are increasing vaccine hesitancy in the community
- Positive feedback on the Victorian Arts Community vaccine advertisement
- Mixed messages about AstraZeneca / need clearer public health messaging
- ATAGI must accept some blame for AstraZeneca hesitancy
- ATAGI need to give stronger advice about increasing AstraZeneca uptake in NSW

3. Sharing information encouragement and support

- Sharing positive vaccination stories / encouraging others to get vaccinated
- Sharing information about where to get vaccinated and eligibility
- Providing encouragement and support for those in the NSW and/or Vic lockdown
- Sharing advice on how to get through lockdowns
- Vaccination / lockdowns essential to control COVID-19 outbreaks

- Encouraging others to follow lockdown rules
- Discussing strategies to address vaccine hesitancy in friends/family
- Promoting free food delivery for those in lockdown

4. NSW Lockdown:

- NSW state government is responsible for the lengthy lockdown in Sydney
- NSW is losing control of the outbreak
- NSW lockdown restrictions are not strict enough
- Should follow WA's harsh border controls and penalties for those breaking quarantine
- NSW essential worker classification is too confusing
- NSW should learn from Victoria's response to outbreaks
- Extra vaccines will not help the current outbreak in NSW

5. Vaccine hesitancy:

- Vaccine hesitancy is selfish / criticism of those who are hesitant
- Young people are being criticised for not taking AstraZeneca
- Older Australians should get AstraZeneca
- People don't want AstraZeneca
- Older Australians want Pfizer
- Vaccine choice will increase vaccinations
- Lockdowns are reducing vaccine hesitancy

6. Misinformation and anti-lockdown/anti-vaccination comments

- Against mandatory vaccinations / vaccination passports
- Covid vaccine is unsafe/ so will not get vaccinated
- Lockdowns don't work / protesting lockdowns
- Social media wellness influencers promoting vaccine hesitancy

7. Human Impacts of COVID-19, lockdowns and border closures:

- Young woman dies of COVID-19
- Impact of border closures on providing support to family
- Mental fatigue of repeated lockdowns and COVID-19
- Unpredictability of snap lockdowns and making plans
- Worry about vulnerable family members

8. Difficulty accessing vaccination

- Difficulty getting vaccine appointment/none available
- Want to get vaccinated but ineligible
- Difficulties accessing Pfizer vaccination

9. Highlighting those who should get vaccinated

- Teachers
- All essential workers
- Healthcare workers
- Aged care workers
- Pregnant people

Comparing the NSW and Victorian Lockdowns

Generally, those in Victoria were more positive about the imposed lockdown due to confidence that harsh restrictions will end lockdown faster. There were also more positive sentiments toward the Victorian state government's COVID-19 response. This was compared to criticism of the NSW state government for not imposing harsher restrictions and losing control of the virus in NSW. Both states shared encouragement and support to others in lockdown as well as information about where to access vaccination.

**Comparison limitations:*

It is difficult to assess definitively the location of each social media user. Therefore, comments regarding specific States (NSW and Victoria) might possibly originate from those outside of NSW/Vic and may not reflect the views of NSW/Vic residents.

NSW Top 5 Themes

1. Negativity toward Gladys Berejiklian and NSW state government COVID-19 response
2. Delta variant affecting young Australians / young people in hospital
3. NSW needs stricter lockdown restrictions to control the outbreak
4. Sharing positive vaccination experiences, information, and encouragement
5. Difficulty accessing vaccination appointment/ long waits at vaccination hubs

Victoria Top 5 Themes

1. Positivity toward Dan Andrews and Victorian state government COVID-19 response
2. Sharing positive vaccination experiences, information, and encouragement
3. AstraZeneca hesitancy
4. Discussing anti-lockdown protests
5. Discussing local advertisement campaigns to increase vaccination levels