

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.

HOW: Using a sophisticated data analytics tool, TIGER C19 extracts posts containing selected key terms or topics from two social media platforms: “Reddit” and “Twitter”. The resulting data are then subjected to thematic analyses, as presented below.

WHY: TIGER C19 informs public health and health information responses by examining local Covid-related issues of current interest as both a supplement and complement to other research and intelligence. The current focus is on Victoria, though the emerging themes have broader resonance and application to other jurisdictions in Australia and overseas.

Summary of results

Table 1 and "Emerging Themes" below summarise the findings derived from the posts and reposts for the key words or topics.

Data collection period: 22 February 2022

Total number of hits/posts: 14,440

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

Term/Topic	Posts	Term/Topic	Posts
Booster	1,923	Freedom	2,981
Protest	5,382	Isolation	552
Travel	3,593		

Emerging themes

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

1. Freedom and choice create divisions

- Selfish motives contrasted against community responsibility
- Divisions and tensions in workplace around vaccination status and return to work
- Politicization of vaccination debate attracts nationalistic and other outside issues
- Insisting on rights and choices (e.g. to not be vaccinated) accrues consequences

2. Support for constraints on travel

- All need to abide by individual country rules
- Likely lasting impact on travel to work and effect on CBD businesses
- Narratives and accounts of travellers crossing open borders
- Support for continued PCR testing prior to travel

3. Consequences arising from lifting travel restrictions

- Health consequences of moving between hemispheres and flu seasons
- Danger of ongoing spread of Covid due to limited testing for travellers
- Hope that increased travel will lead to increased levels of vaccination
- Work travel will further spread Covid and result in new mutations

4. Isolation presents unique scenarios

- Uncertainty over isolation rules and changing requirements at home and overseas
- Demands for special provisions for unvaccinated people to isolate if Covid positive
- Isolation impacts on health workforce
- Isolation unfairly impacts on casual workers with no sick leave entitlements

5. Support for ongoing vaccination and booster program

- Cases and narratives of boosters reducing Covid symptoms
- Hope that booster program will allow return to “normal” living
- Support for mandated boosters for students and parents attending school events
- Debate and queries around potential need for additional boosters and classification of “fully-dosed”

6. Debate around protests highlights complexity

- Support for the right to protest if legal, non-violent, non-destructive, and safe
- Concern over the use of sonic frequency weaponry to disperse protesters
- Multiple reports of protests from overseas (e.g., Ottawa, Canada, truck driver protest)
- Refugee and other protests contrasted with media profile given to Covid protests