



Coronavax: Selected early findings from our interviews and focus groups with the WA community

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• Funders

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Participant groups

Group	Status	Number ⁺
Pharmacists	Manuscript in preparation	20
Regional/remote WA	Manuscript in preparation	20
Adults aged 18–29 years	Manuscript in preparation	19
Health care workers (excluding pharmacists)	Manuscript in preparation	19
Adults aged 65+ years	Manuscript in preparation	18
Parents/guardians of children aged <5 years	Manuscript in preparation	18
CALD*	Manuscript in preparation	11
Parents/guardians of children aged 5-18 years	Interviews ongoing	23 (of ~40)
Teachers and childcare	Interviews ongoing	13 (of ~20)
Aged care workers	Interviews ongoing	11 (of ~20)
Pregnant women	Interviews ongoing	6 (of ~10)
Aboriginal adults	Undergoing community consultation – likely to start Jan 2022	0
Service providers for homeless, mental health, domestic violence, drug and alcohol dependent	Focus groups starting November 2021	0
Adults aged 18–64 years with comorbidities	Interviews starting November 2021	0

*+ 3x focus groups completed with 37 CALD women

⁺ as of 08/11/2021

COVID-19 VACCINE INTENTIONS MODEL



COVID-19 Vaccine Intention	Reason/s					
Acceptor	No concerns about vaccine safety; and	No concerns about vaccine efficacy; and	No concerns about access; and	Will accept whatever vaccine is offered, when it is offered		
Cautious Acceptor	May have some concerns about vaccine safety; or	May have some concerns about vaccine efficacy; or	May have some concerns about access; or	Would <i>prefer</i> other vaccine, but will accept whatever is offered, when it is offered		
Wait Awhile	For more data on general vaccine safety; or	For more data on general vaccine efficacy; or	For easier access; or	For other vaccine brand perceived as safer; or	For other vaccine brand perceived as having greater efficacy; or	Until they feel at risk of COVID-19
Refuser	Concerns about vaccine safety; and	Concerns about efficacy; and	No concerns about access (as no intention to vaccinate)			

* Until it's mandated!

Carlson et al, *under review*

Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination

- Around a quarter of our 44 respondents (at time of analysis) emphatically support (since have 122 more not in paper)
- Many supported strong consequences for non-vaccination even if they said they strongly opposed mandates
- Wide support for business (customer) mandates
- Most prefer incentives to punishment
- Some say “weird” or “like bribery”
- Participants mostly supported tightly regulated medical exemptions granted by specialists, with little interest in religious or personal belief exemptions

COVID-19 vaccination facilitators and barriers experienced by WA community



Facilitators

- To live a 'normal' life again
- To protect themselves and others (friends, family, patients, community, colleagues)
- To travel again/see loved ones interstate or overseas
- Feel at risk due to work (HCW, ACW, teachers)
- Appreciative of WA state government
- Feel safe/lucky to be in WA, but acknowledge that risk will return once borders open again
- ABC most trusted source of info; very critical however of the media and their role in creating vaccine hesitancy

Barriers

- Some have concerns about blood clots
- Some have concerns about vaccine being made too quickly
- Most experienced difficulties in:
 - 1) navigating the booking system, and
 - 2) obtaining an appointment
- Few very had seen any Commonwealth or WA Government information campaigns (earlier in rollout)

Regional/remote WA

People feel safe from COVID in their communities

Divide between regional and remote responses

- Vulnerability versus ‘treat like everyone else’

Largely pro-vaccination

- ‘Doing the right thing’ for the state and country
- Strong awareness of anti-vax movement/clusters within their communities
- Traveling moderately common, due to distrust of local quality; convenience; or brand preference.

Recommendations:

- Emphasise safety of vaccination process at *any* clinic/provider

*Great Southern (7), South West (6), Wheatbelt (3)
Mid West (2), Kimberley (1), Goldfields (1)*



CALD barriers to uptake



- Concerns: side effects and speed of development
- Limited knowledge; information too complex or **not in language**
- Complicated **online booking process**
- Misinformation in community or social media platforms
- Inconvenient vaccine clinic locations; lack of awareness of GP /pharmacy
- Facilitators of uptake:
 - WA opening international **borders**
 - GP who speaks their **native language/s and recommends vaccination**
 - **Trust** in WA government

Willing to vaccinate, if they get the right support

Interviewees:

- N=11
- 55% female
- Average age: 44 years
- 100% university educated
- 89% high English proficiency
- 64% religious
- 64% speak English at home

Focus group participants:

- N=37
- 100% female
- Average age: 42 years
- 11% no education; 16% university
- 17% high English proficiency
- 94% religious
- 13% speak English at home

Hesitancy / Refusal



Factors that correlate with hesitancy:

- Family and friends who are hesitant or 'antivax' can influence others
- Previous issues with vaccinations (e.g. reactions)
- Believe they are at risk of an adverse event
- Pregnancy
- Lack of formal education

Current concerns/issues:

- Short term side effects (flu-like symptoms, fatigue – missing work)
- Long term side effects (e.g. infertility)
- Adverse events (e.g. blood clots)
- Recent / fast development of vaccines
- Vaccines have not been tested on young children or fetuses

Recommendations



- Have health officials and scientists be the face of the rollout – not politicians
 - Trusted community members and leaders, Australian celebrities
- Memorable advertisements
- More clear and consistent messaging about the safety of the vaccines
- Information
 - High and low style messaging – both simple and complex depending on preferences
 - Provide statistics and risk factors broken down via categories (e.g. age)
 - Promote benefits (reducing transmission, protecting vulnerable family and community members)
 - Explain how the COVID-19 vaccines are safe, particularly compared to other vaccines
 - The ability to ask an expert questions – e.g. a hotline, particularly for free
- Provide resources for reaching out to hesitant friends/relatives