

COVID-19 Check-in:

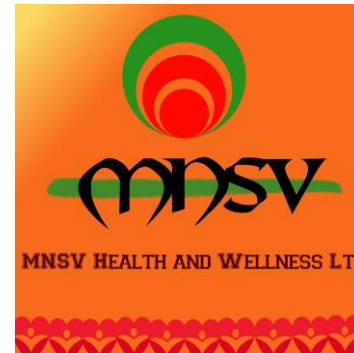
“How are you doing, Aotearoa?”

Rapid insights: 14 October 2021



Collaborative Approach

This study is a collaboration between Moana Research, FEM Research Limited, MNSV Health & Wellness Consultants and Asian Family Services.



Objectives

With the recent COVID-19 outbreak, the overall objectives of this research are to explore how New Zealanders feel and what they think about:

1. The recent COVID-19 outbreak and the requirements under restricted Alert Levels
2. COVID-19 vaccinations and communications regarding the roll out
3. Any announcements, policies and/or mandates related to COVID-19 response



Since last report first week of September:

- Rest of New Zealand moved to alert level 2
- Auckland remained at alert level 4 for a further week then moved to alert level 3.
- Auckland now has a 3-step phase for moving out of alert level 3
- Announcement made on Monday 11 October that the health and teaching workforce must receive their first vaccination by 1 November and their second vaccination by 1 January 2022



Qualitative Interviews



Research Approach #1: Interviews

1:1 telephone interviews

Ethnic-specific 1:1 phone interviews and one focus group were undertaken from 8 – 13 October to obtain in-depth insights. The following table provides an overview of representative population groups interviewed. Interviewers were matched to preferred language of interviewee:

Demographic	Week 1
Māori (incl young adults)	9
Asian	4
Southeast Asian	5
NZ European	4
Pacific (incl young adults)	12
TOTAL	34

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Māori sample voices



Māori specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- Most interviewed feel fine with the restrictions as it gives them a sense of safety
- General understanding of the need for restrictive movements especially when comparing with pandemic outcome overseas
- General appreciation of the challenges posed by the Delta variant
- Challenges include not being able to be with whanau for special events or progressing projects
- One interviewed did not believe in the need for restrictions and that we should be following the approach taken in other countries of living with Covid





A bit more anxious now

**Its a bot of a mixed bag really. I am very comfortable in my household. I live with a couple in a household,. I wish that things were more normal but understand that the levels should be what they should be as advised by experts so as many people as possible can be safe.
The collective comes first. I can work from home**

The level 3 with restrictions is very restrictive, bubble of 10 is too restrictive - for pakeha they say two households, forus that doesnt work. We have more than 10. Feeling that the levels are being abused



Māori specific themes

Clarity of information and compliance:

- Generally clear about what needs to be done under alert level 3
- Most find the new steps 1, 2 and 3 confusing – one did not even know about them
- All those interviewed were scanning QR codes when visiting locations – one noted app missing after grandchildren playing with them
- All interviewed were wearing masks





**Felt a bit safer before they brought in all the phases because now the phases up more interaction with other bubbles so you can never be to sure where people have been and who's going where.
Made me a little more anxious.**



Māori specific themes

Information:

- Range of responses for use of UAC website – from never having visited the site through to visiting it all the time.
- UAC adverts are recognizable on social media sites except for a couple who do not recognise them at all
- Wide range of preferences for information sources reflecting personal choice (radio stations, social media sites, TV news stations, websites and trusted sources) – mainstream and fringe media.
- All interviewed sought information at least once a day through to 4-5 times a day. One referred to every time they went on social media i.e. approx. 20x a day.
- Generally feel they have all the information they need although would like more information from Māori doctors and knowledge-holders





I suppose if it was for the vaccination rates, if it was more Māori-led I would have more trust and faith in what the govt was saying. It's tricky as its such a systemic colonial system that struggles to let any power go or partnership be recognised.

No but I do think the messaging is getting a bit drilly. Think they need to ease up - don't need to say it every 10 mins, but I suppose there's some science around saying it every 10 mins

Its good the way they flash different things across the screen - get your vaccination, wear a mask. Social media can have an effect on this aspect as a reminder.



Māori specific themes

Influencers:

- Those interviewed were often influencers in their circle of family and friends. However other family members who worked in the health sector were also influential.
- Family motivations for adhering to COVID-19 health behaviours were mostly to protect children and elderly.
- Most friendship circles do not have a clear influencer – often utilized for sharing information and thoughts and sometimes celebrating each other getting vaccinated.
- Community groups were less 'influential' in terms of decision-making however key leaders include leaders who walk the talk e.g. John Tamihere, Māori doctors and family members working at the frontline.



Māori specific themes

Trust:

- Most interviewed had a general trust in government, but some believe there are political agendas that influence decisions. One person did not feel comfortable sharing responses to these questions.





You kind of have to trust that most people are doing the right thing. You just have to accept that there will be people who don't do that. Its not the govts fault that there will be outliers. I trust that there is a process in place. Trusting in healthcare professionals is the wisest thing to do.

I believe Dr Di and Mark Kopua - I don't listen to anyone else really - just my whānau and those two



Māori specific themes

COVID-19 vaccination: views and behaviour

- Not all interviewed were vaccinated or had household members who were unvaccinated
- Of those who weren't vaccinated, reasons include:
 - Vaccination not being a priority for them and they don't believe it's needed
 - Concern about impact it will have on their bodies
 - Uncertainty and lack of information about vaccination outcomes
 - Wanting more stories from real people (vs 'paid actors')
- Those who were vaccine hesitant but changed their minds, had been convinced eventually by the safety and efficacy of the vaccine through a range of sources. Some had their concerns about being hapu alleviated.
- Still concern that the vaccine does not give you 100% protection from the virus
- Concern about vaccine mandates





Hesitance about what if anything it will do to my tinana – drain my energy and slight hesitance of not knowing what's in it, then you don't know a lot of what's in a lot of things. The fear of the unknown or the new

Its graphene oxide which is poison to humans so why is it even questionable

It's not a priority, it's not that they dint believe it's needed. It's just not something that is front of mind



Māori specific themes

Employment

- Not all responded to the employment question however of those who discussed their employer, they referred to their supportive policies to protect employees e.g., inability to work to full capacity with children at home or needing a day off.
- Employees receive information advice and support from their employers, sometimes daily
- No significant changes to workplace policies or approaches and none experienced challenges in relation to vaccination policies



Māori specific themes

Future – coming months

- Concern among vaccinated Māori about the rates of unvaccinated Māori
- Anxiety about the outbreak becoming uncontrolled and the impact this will have on Māori who are already experiencing inequitable outcomes
- Implications on work – uncertainty about access to work particularly those in vulnerable sectors e.g. entertainment
- Hopes for the coming months include:
 - High vaccination rates for Māori
 - Unrestricted travel
 - More time with whanau and returning to events
 - End of Covid





If we move down any lower, we are going to suffer in the sense that we will have higher death rates. People around the world are still dealing with have had to battle with their decisions as both – we need to stick to our current course of trying to eliminate rather than trying to suppress and hope that it will get better. We need to learn how to live with Covid but not too quickly. As Māori – people who are in charge of large-scale events like Te Matatini need to take a moral responsibility in the – and marae – in the part that they play in super spread because you allow people and when we are talking about Māori, we are talking about the most vulnerable gathering in one place – mandating and requesting that they only come if they are vaccinated is the best way to go

I think probably a vaccination passport will come to fruition with varying degrees of success and the public reaction to how we use that. Getting into venues and things but if you are going to a restaurant, you are putting the onus on us... I hope that more and more people who were hesitant become less so and we can get back to whatever normal is



COVID-19
Check-in:

Pacific sample voices



Pacific specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- A range of responses reflecting adaptation to the restrictions and understanding of why the restrictions are in place
- Most are growing tired of the lockdown restrictions particularly those living outside of Auckland but are compliant nonetheless
- Some families are fearful of Covid because of health issues among family members
- Uncertainty among most families about the future
- Impact on children and family members is a concern



My dad is an essential worker so he is BAU consistently but he is in remission from cancer so there's always that element of fear. My brother has Down syndrome and he's not enjoying it at all because he's very social and enjoys his hours at the cafe and going around. He thinks he's being punished at times so we try and balance out by going outdoors for walks and trying to explain it to him more. My daughter is devastated she's not able to go to school and spend time with her friends as much as she would like but she understands that it's the best thing for our family and those who are vulnerable and we've set up a little gym for my family to just be able to still stay fit and active through it all. I think this lockdown has been hard for me and as a single mum, being able to study and work at the hospital is hard because my other job is basically not existent at the moment. I had to try and get a more stable part time at hospital during the night shifts. We all understand seeing the cases go up up up that it's good to have these restrictions it's just hard sometimes and mentally takes a toll on the whanau in different ways.





School and assessments have made it hard because there's stuff we have to personally go in (to school) for, we have to break our bubble to complete

Level 2 this time round feels different very different to the last level 2. The general feeling is that things will be different for a while to come, and we may have to adjust to a new type of normal. Overall, we are feeling a sense of uncertainty and being stuck and that we are at the mercy of what happens in Auckland. Also, some of my family are experiencing financial worry as the restriction continues with no definite end date.

We have also been able to come closer as a family





When people in the community exaggerate parts of the restrictions and become upset when others aren't going overboard like them but are following government guidelines

Probably wanting to see friends and the rest of family. Especially now that my newborn is here and no one's been able to meet her besides my immediate family and partners close family





I think being part of a collective culture it is hard to check in with the elders. In the beginning it was really hard to turn away siblings as well as cousins when they wanted to come and visit dad. Especially during his birthday's and big memory dates. However, they care about them just as much as I do and so they understand that I'm not being mean, it's the best thing for my dad given his health issues. Another thing originally was that I would have to get all of the groceries. That would be time consuming but now we have a system where I get it once a week or its click and collect or it's dropped off at home and delivered.



Pacific specific themes

Clarity of information and compliance:

- Mixed responses – most unclear on specific details but increasingly aware that they can now meet with another household, outside, with up to 10 people
- Some felt that they should've kept level 3 the way it was prior as have not made any changes since steps were introduced
- All interviewed were scanning in at locations and usually on phones – varying experiences of having learnt to use the app. A few were skeptical about signing in manually and breaches of privacy. One described a manual process of putting paper into a box which provides some protection.
- High compliance with mask wearing in indoor locations



Information on the rules and restrictions that are clear and simple to understand and also have a visual or picture example. Also having information in Tongan and other languages and easily accessible. Also when you go to a cafe or out to eat having visual markings and signs of where to stand and distance to keep is very helpful.

Maybe use less sophisticated words on press conferences. Language that Pacific elders and those with limited English can understand.

Keep the rules simple and clear, rules for level 4 are clear, rules for level 3 are not for e.g. the meeting with another household did not make sense because to me it increased the risk of spread and the high numbers since level 3 are showing this.

I don't need anything else to help me follow the rules as my motivation is my mum and family



Pacific specific themes

Influencers:

- Family are often the biggest 'influence' in decision-making. Often a wide range of family influencers - spouses, elders, parents
- Community influencers are often church leaders. For students, Pacific student association leaders also influential.
- Employers were considered influential for most who were employed, particularly regarding adherence to policies such as mask wearing and PPE. Even if there are no mandates, there's strong cues from employers.

Pacific specific themes

Employment:

- Some referred to supportive employer practices regarding work life balance (e.g. pregnant women were to work from home). Most felt that their employers were understanding of their family/home challenges. Of those who did not believe their employers were understanding, they cited paradigm differences. None felt that there were any challenges to adherence to vaccination policies or systems.
- Mandating vaccinations has driven the decision for a few to get vaccinated



The social distancing requirements at work can make is difficult particularly with colleagues and in the lunchroom. We are so used to being together in a group and eating together that the distance rules means we can only eat with a few other colleagues, but it changes the dynamic and interaction. So now I eat lunch by myself. Sometimes I get lonely and feel alone and that's not good for me because I start to overthink things and sometimes feel overwhelmed. I shared this with my Manager, and they referred me to a confidential employee EAP resource where I can call confidentially and talk, and this have given me some good coping tips.



Pacific specific themes

COVID-19 vaccination: views and behaviour

- Most interviewed were vaccinated
- Of those who were unvaccinated or had family members who were unvaccinated, reasons were due to concern with pace of vaccination development, misinformation and disability challenges
- Of those who were vaccinated but were previously vaccine-hesitant, key influencers were people in their network of family or friends, particularly those who were working in the health sector. Other key factors for change were vaccine information zooms hosted by Pacific experts and translated information for elders.



My brother, he has Down's syndrome so it's hard to settle him. I have been engaging my GP more to get more information. It's planning at the moment but for his health I do think it's best

My dad at first when he spoke with his sisters. But our generation rallied together to encourage them and now we're all on board. The translations helped and their pastors made the biggest difference in encouraging it

Me (vaccine-hesitant) - but I will do it now because it is slowly becoming mandatory



Pacific specific themes

Future – coming months:

- 'Weary, tired, exhausted' – one day at a time
- Strong feeling of uncertainty
- Difficult to plan events e.g. Christmas
- Some are hopeful that restrictions will ease but strong element of 'not knowing'
- Lack of stability can be exhausting for some
- Everyone interviewed gave a sense of 'doing their best for now'
- Celebrating Christmas with loved ones seems to be a hopeful goal for many

COVID-19
Check-in:

South Asian sample voices



South Asian specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- Most families are doing okay and have found ways to adapt.
- Due to longer lockdown, there is a general sense of 'tiredness' and monotony
- Move to level 3 made things a bit easier e.g. access to takeaways and where needed, a household joined bubbles
- Concern is driven by uncertainty



We are tired as a family, it is hard work with young children at home. It has been a long day everyday ... monotonous. We were hopeful before that NZ is safest (place)... not anymore.

Nothing new, just same, my parents and kids are bored. Thanks to trust we are members – some activities such as online tambola, quizzes, games and BollyEx exercise classes keep us entertained and connected with others.

I am an essential worker, nothing much has changed for us. I am still isolating in my barrage with my dog. I don't want to pass anything on to my family if I am exposed



South Asian specific themes

Clarity of information and compliance:

- General confusion with the 3-step plan
- A better explanation for why we needed a 3-step plan may have been helpful for some
- Those who were working or volunteering had a better understanding of the changes in restrictions
- Almost everyone scanned the QR codes regularly. Mention by one of relying on others they are travelling with to scan
- Everyone wore masks and some planned to even in level 1



Looks like people are confused. Look at my husband's sister who joined us when level 3 was announced

Nope, what do steps 1, 2 and 3 mean? I am confused.

More confusion and extra steps complicated the core message. Please keep it simple and effective communication and support so that people who need to follow it understand it well

Kind of (scan). I have noticed that many people who are not tech savvy avoid the scan or don't know how to do it.

I am aware many people do not especially when they have to keep their visit secret. When kids do not want parents to know or husband do not want wife to know



South Asian specific themes

Information:

- Only some visited the UAC site regularly. Of those who visit the UAC site, one found it too wordy. Others prefer non-online sources.
- Some were familiar with UAC communications but still preferred tailored messaging
- Other information sources include Indian news, Kuk-Punjabi, Indian weekender, Muskaan Care group, Humm FM, South Asian Network, Friends for Fiji, Ethnic communities pages, Apna Radio and TV, whatapp updates by group volunteers
- Range of information seeking behaviours – e.g., 30mins on phone in the morning, emails during work, social media after work, 6pm news,



I know about (the UAC site) and refer to it sometimes

**I have heard of it from my husband. I don't visit this.
Information shared by my group members, radio and
children is enough for me**



South Asian specific themes

COVID-19 vaccination: views and behaviours

- All interviewed were vaccinated
- There were a few vaccine hesitant, but they eventually made decision to get vaccinated after sourcing relevant information. Likely to be young adults.
- Some were motivated after losing loved ones to Covid overseas but still fear among reluctant few.



Yes, my daughter who was pregnant. Her husband was antivaccination for her. I had shared this situation with my GP and group volunteer who is a health professional. I am so grateful that Muskaan group made an effort to work on information and evidence proving it is safe for pregnant mum and baby, no harm and what could be the consequences if mum to be is not vaccinated. She had spoken with both my daughter and son in law with information evidence from WHO and health professionals using some daily life examples. She left the decision entirely onto them and suggested to make an informed decision. She had notified GP as well to do a follow up consult with them to see what they have decided. I can't tell you my happiness when they agreed to get my Churran (daughter) vaccinated. Now both mum and bubba are protected. I believe there are many scared and concerned people who need help and support with answers and information they can trust and understand to make informed decision. I am grateful to Muskaan group for going extra miles.





My son 27 yrs did not have his vaccination yet. He has phobia to needles and not convinced that this covid vaccination is effective for young and healthy person like him. We are trying hard using emotional intelligence and persuasion by her partner. Hoping that he will get convinced soon.

He has lost 3 family members back home after having their Covid vaccination.

He is scared and does not trust despite of all we have tried.

My Son -in Law was concerned around vaccination during pregnancy. But with right support and information, he agreed



South Asian specific themes

Future – coming months

- Lots of uncertainty particularly regarding
 - Children and Student progress (primary through to University)
 - Businesses
 - When this situation will end
- Has been an opportunity to be grateful and to reflect on positives such as family time



Thinking of selling my small business – it is not sustaining and we are out of reserves. Will I get a job?

My children's study worries me. What is their future?

Unsure! Still holding onto faith that it will be alright

I can not talk my concerns with my family and bother them. thank you for asking how I am feeling? I am feeling light.

Assurance of certainty, emotional and financial stability, firm employment, business, sustainability housing, building capacity and capability for good health / wellness services.



COVID-19 **Check-in:**

Asian sample voices



Asian specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- Generally adapted to level 3 lockdown restrictions and follow health and safety protocols. Some **concerns** about:
 - Moving down alert level when there are still mystery cases
 - What we can and can't do under the new step 1, 2 and 3 for Auckland's alert level 3
 - Prolonged lockdown's impacts on socialisation, family's health and wellbeing and children's education
 - Potential risk of essential workers' families catching COVID-19



My household is ok. Each of them has their hobbies such as baking and exercising. I suppose working and studying during lockdown is a bit harder due to extra shifts to cover staff who needs to get tested... I'm not worried here in NZ because the government are responsive, and the people are generally following rules. I'm more worried about my family in the Philippines because of the cases there."

(Filipino, female, 25-34 years, support worker)

"For me and my family, we feel that the current Alert Level 3 restriction is a good decision for New Zealanders in general, and Aucklanders in particular. This is because protecting the health of each individual and the community is paramount. Without level 3 restrictions, there would be a high probability of community transmission of COVID-19."

(Vietnamese, female, 18-24 years)

"Family member are normally busy, but during lockdown we can spend time together, which we enjoy and feel happy. But sometimes we feel stuck as physical activities are limited, which has also impacted on family health and weight. I also notice that children spend more time using electronic devices, and it is hard to build relationship with other people."

(Korean, female, 35-44 years, housewife)





“I think it is not safe to lower the level when we still have mystery cases. And the new 3 steps for Auckland’s level 3 restriction is not that practical. I feel clearer on previous level regarding what we can do and what we can’t do.”

(Chinese, 35-44, male, frontline worker)

“My husband is a doctor. During this time, he works more than normal hours and I am worried that he is potentially exposed to the coronavirus more than other people. I keep a lot of masks and sanitisers at home. I hope essential worker's family can receive some advantages, such as getting vaccination when the essential worker gets, or receiving masks, as an expression of appreciation. It can encourage the essential workers and their families.”

(Wife of essential worker)



Asian specific themes

Clarity of information and compliance:

There is general understanding of alert level changes and compliance with level 3 lockdown restrictions, mask-wearing and scanning/signing in.

- BUT don't fully understand the three steps for Auckland's alert level 3
- Know the importance of wearing a mask and will keep wearing at level 1 and 2
- Know scanning can help support contact tracing



“It is not the previous level 3. I don’t fully understand the new steps and the new rules.”

(Chinese, 35-44, male, frontline worker)

“[The three steps] are quite new, so I need to know the details. For example, when our family meet another household, we need to count the total number (10), and we need to check the exact information when we do outside activities. I am wearing a mask and understand well about its needs and regulations. I will use a mask until vaccination rate goes high enough, even if it isn't mandatory.”

(Korean, female, 35-44 years, housewife)

“I will continue wearing a mask if Auckland Region is going down to Alert Level 2 or 1. Because I think going down alert levels doesn't mean the outbreak is over.”

(Vietnamese, female, 18-24 years)





“I am wearing a mask most of the time when I am indoor but not always when I am outdoor. I will keep wearing it at level 1 and 2. I understand how to put on and wear a mask but I don’t always follow; I reuse the same one many times.”

(Chinese, male, 35-44 years)

“I’ve downloaded the QR Code Scanner on my phone, and I always scan when I visit some locations outside. All information is really clear to me, and it’s not challenging for me.”

(Vietnamese, female, 18-24 years)

“[Scanning] is okay with me and my family. I noticed that people scan more than before, but many people do not keep social distance.”

(Korean, female, 35-44 years)

“I only scan when there is a staff monitoring. I have activated the Bluetooth function. If I am a close contact, I think this function will work to alert me.”

(Chinese, male, 35-44 years)



Asian specific themes

Influencers

- In the family: Usually the male head of household is the most influential person. For those not living with family, looking after one's own health is the main drive. Etc
- With friends: Usually on an equal basis but people with expert knowledge tend to be more influential.
- Community groups: the church and some ethnic organisations are influential.

Asian specific themes

Employment

- Influence is generally on an equal basis between workmates.
- Most feel that their employers are supportive.
- Workplace has health and safety measures and follows COVID rules.
- Possible challenge is about unvaccinated workers returning to the workplace after lockdown.

Asian specific themes

COVID-19 vaccination: views and behaviour

- All interviewees and their households are vaccinated.
- Some people are vaccine hesitant because they are worried about negative side effects.
- Other questions they have include: will people have to get a COVID vaccine every year? How effective is the current vaccine against new variants of the virus?

Asian specific themes

Future – Coming months

- Feelings of uncertainty in the coming months; worried that there will be more community cases.
- The lockdown has impacts on family's health, children's activities and social connections
- Hope to go down alert level before Christmas
- People need financial and mental health support over the coming months.



“I noticed that the government seemed to be carried away by the pressure to open and that is unsettling. It would be a waste of 5 weeks of lockdown if they change the rules and levels due to the pressure.”

(Filipino, female, 25-34 years)

“We are expecting more community cases. We feel unsafe, we may become the next Australia.”

(Chinese, male, 35-44 years)

“I wonder how long we will be at level 3. I feel uncomfortable due to the uncertainty.”

(Korean, female, 35-44 years)

“I worry about more COVID-19 cases in community.”

(Vietnamese, female, 18-24 years)





“Hopefully before Christmas, alert level has gone down to either level 2 or 1, and cases have lessened.”

(Filipino, female, 25-34 years)

“Hope people can build better and trustful relationships in our community. For our family, I hope our family can keep spending time together even after the lockdown.”

(Korean, female, 35-44 years)

“I hope that in the next few months, the COVID-19 epidemic will end in New Zealand and elsewhere in the world.”

(Vietnamese, female, 18-24 years)





“Self-care for everyone and psychological support from our church/faith, family and government.”

(Filipino, female, 25-34 years)

“Financial support, more clear and culturally appropriate instructions on each level.”

(Chinese, male, 35-44 years)

“I think students, including my kids, are showing educational achievement gaps during the lockdown, so the issue about providing equal education opportunities for children must be addressed. It is not for our family, but I know many people lost jobs, so providing job skills and training would be helpful for many people too.”

(Korean, female, 35-44 years)



COVID-19
Check-in:

European sample voices



European specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- Recognition of this lockdown being necessary, but also a growing and widespread feeling that it is a band-aid solution and that a clear path forward is needed (particularly now that vaccination is more widely available and being taken up)
- Some feeling that while people may not be dying from COVID directly, the lockdowns and the impact of these may contribute to more lost life overall (e.g. through impacts on housing, poverty, mental illness)
- Awareness of and frustration with people not following rules and with speculative and judgemental media rhetoric – common across L3 and L2
- General perception that the current public health measures are not being taken as seriously by the public as previous lockdowns or as Level 4 – common across L3 and L2
- Some difficulty accessing food due to health conditions and lack of delivery availability (even with priority delivery considerations)

European specific themes

General sentiment and perception:

- Depression and low mood across the board; Struggling with social isolation; Exhaustion and fatigue across the board – work related, and parenting related; Some difficulty accessing mental health services due to not meeting ethnic and/or severity criteria, and feeling that GP is not equipped to appropriately respond, and discomfort with talking to a stranger over zoom to address needs (raised by both psychologist and prospective service users)
- Concerns about access to education, both for young learners and for those completing NCEA
- Concerns about the human rights implications of a firmer stance on vaccination in particular – the idea of a vaccination passport, restrictions on social engagement and participation based on vaccination status, the impact on accessing meaningful employment, general services
- Fear around financial security – reduced wages, relying on personal savings, risk of losing businesses entirely
- Resentment, overwhelm, boredom, uncertainty all expressed; Increased sense of frustration, negativity, and difficulty coping compared to previous samples



“It seems like people aren’t taking this lockdown as seriously, people are still out in the street who have just stopped to have a chat with their neighbours. Seeing the 45-cases on Wednesday... it’s like “yup that’s what happens when you’re a week in and people aren’t doing what they’re supposed to do”.

“My mum gets very depressed in lockdown, and she not an extrovert, but for retired people who rely on things like going to church, and being part of groups, it feels like there’s nothing to get up for. There have been days she just stays in bed.”

“For me that’s part of the fatigue, its those sorts of elements, watching the hate filled commentary, people going on about the selfishness of the unvaccinated. The people that are at risk are the unvaccinated. You actually should have compassion for them. Don’t turn and be horrible to people that are fearful, often for very good reasons. The lack of compassion behind some of that rhetoric, and I get sad, and spin out.”





“My partner has been struggling a bit more as he has been working the whole way through at work and is stressed and overwhelmed and not having access to social support and different things he can do to distract and relieve the stress, its like shall we drink beer and play board games, walk around our block again? Trying to persuade a mildly depressed man to go for a walk is ummm...”

“The isolation for me as a solo parent – you can’t extend your bubble further than the person you are sharing your care of children with, and you end up in your bubble by yourself...I haven’t seen another adult since the Monday before the lockdown, I mean I saw the doctor on the Tuesday, but it’s really isolating. I live in the middle of nowhere in the bush I can’t even see the street to see people walking around and no cellphone reception which is great under normal circumstances but chuck a lockdown in there and it’s not.”

“We’re feeling like they’ve been going on for a long time, longer than we first expected and we feel that with the vaccination rollout and having other possible precautions that we can take, it’s time to get out of the lockdown and we’re feeling frustrated.”



European specific themes

Workplace:

- Impact of mask wearing and zoom on psychological work – thwarts connectedness between clinician and client; Severe fatigue amongst clinicians.
- Wage support is appreciated, but small businesses – especially those mandated to close until L2 – need help with overheads or they will face closure. Discrepancy between wage availability for ECE workers (private) and kindergarten workers (under MOE)
- Some employers and professional bodies supportive and sharing COVID information, others taking a laissez-faire approach
- Mixed levels of awareness regarding mental health needs of employees and of the challenges they face. Workplaces discussed have changed policies and procedures, but behaviour change and adherence vary
- Apprehension around what workplace responses to vaccination will mean for colleagues and for the division of labour in the workplace. Workplaces encouraging vaccinations, some being invasive about questioning vaccination status, contrary to documented policy.



“You’re having to work with people who are distressed because of whatever they are distressed with, as well as COVID, so you’re having to contain yourself to help someone deal with a situation that you’re experiencing yourself. Say you went to see someone for support with sexual abuse, you don’t generally expect them to be being sexually abused at that time, and if they are in that situation, it limits their bandwidth. So, I think this is part of the fatigue; psychologists are trying to go through the same feelings about COVID that their clients are, so it adds an interesting level of fatigue, so you’re having to contain yourself to stay out of the way of what the client needs to attend to.”

“If you go to a therapist who has their face covered, you can’t tell if they’re tuning into you etc. that helps you register empathy or that someone is not laughing at you, and in terms of trust, “I can’t tell how you’re responding to me”. It’s also really important to me in terms of assessing how they are feeling and responding to them. ”





“My husband and I own a gym and there is an expectation that small businesses close – a mandate – there is no financial support except the wage subsidy which doesn’t help with other business costs like ground rent etc. so we’re just expected to pay normal business costs with no money coming in.”

“I’m getting paid less, 80%, with option to top it up to 100% with annual leave...I have the same training as primary and high school teachers, but because ECE is private we don’t get full wages under MOE. 32 hours a week I earn 50k, but at a kindergarten I would get 90, but I am passionate about working with infants and toddlers!”

“Yes so, in lockdown we’ve gone to work from home though that’s not something that has been continued when we’re not in lockdown. We’re supposed to do things like take hand sanitizer but um ...there are policies but perhaps not the behavior changes happening.”

“My work has been very, very clear about its support for vaccination. If someone was on the fence, they’ve been encouraged about where they could get support/info, but it does come across as pressure. I’ve been asked about my status 4 or 5 times and was then provided a policy saying I didn’t have to provide that information.”



European specific themes

Understanding and compliance:

- Understanding of and compliance with rules was high across the board, however more detail was requested for a few specific situations:
 - Extending bubbles (once beyond other caregiver) for single parents
 - What is meant by “locally/in your neighbourhood” as regards exercise and what you can do when your neighbourhood does not have suitable exercise areas
 - Firm decisions on when mask wearing is mandatory, with industry specific examples provided rather than relying on professional bodies or individual discretion
- Awareness of others not obeying rules and strong disapproval of this. Compliance being seen as an Auckland issue, not necessary where there aren't cases
- Recognition that following public health measures is vital to getting out of lockdown/lifting restrictions. Scanning seen as important. People occasionally forgetting to scan, accidentally leaving phone at home, or having trouble finding QR codes at some businesses/locations
- Mask wearing seen as important, and most will continue at level 2, more uncertainty around level 1
 - general sense that public health advice will determine response at lower levels

European specific themes

3-step plan

- General awareness via the announcement, social media, and communications with friends and family
- Rules were unclear to some particularly regarding:
- Social distancing and mask use at outdoor gatherings
- Permissibility of some outdoor activities such as overnight camping
- Clarity sought by visiting the Unite Against COVID-19 website
- Some feeling that the decision seems like a reaction to public sentiment rather than public health advice
- Some participants are connecting with whanau and friends outside, re-opening parts of their business that can be conducted outdoors
- Some are taking extra precautions to protect self and vulnerable family members (e.g. voluntary COVID testing)
- Some feeling unsettled by the decision regarding ECE settings



“I think maybe some having FAQs for people, like in my friend group we’ve been debating how far you can actually go for recreation etc., being clearer than using vague terms like “in your local area”, so people know whether they’re breaking the rules or not.”

“No, I just sort of play by the rules, I’m a bit of a stickler for the rules I think, regardless of my personal opinions on the lockdown I wish everyone would follow the rules because if we did, we’d be out of this within a month.”

“At level 1 I will go along with whatever the public health advice is, but we’re not used to it, and it still feels weird, and others get a bit slack, and that makes it tempting, especially like in the workplace where all day wearing one will be annoying.”



European specific themes

Information sources and influences

- Most are limiting themselves to viewing information 1-3 times a day. General sense that spending a lot of time looking at media or reading opinion pieces etc. heightens anxiety and is unhelpful. Fewer people watching the IPM updates, but all still tune in for the 4PM/Alert level change press conferences
- Primarily accessing information via news websites/news apps – stuff, The Herald, Newshub, RNZ – as a brief summary of salient points is preferred. There is, however, general avoidance of these sites in terms of opinion pieces, speculation, and unhelpful blaming/shaming rhetoric.
- Social media widely regarded as unreliable, and as a source of misinformation and ill-informed opinions, HOWEVER there is a reddit thread that summarises the press conferences which is seen as being succinct and reliable, as well as an Instagram account @politicalediting2 which is valued for its insights into the equity implications of various current political situations
- There is widespread awareness of and disdain for conspiracy theory sources, but empathy for those lacking critical literacy skills, and a desire to be helpful and support better understanding/engagement
- The Unite Against COVID-19 resources are well known via posters, ads on social media, youtube, TVNZ, and the radio, and via the website itself. The sound associated with these ads appears to be becoming an anxiety trigger for some, along with the Civil Defense text sound
- The Unite against COVID-19 website is generally accessed when people want more information about a specific point such as locations of interest, vaccinations and vaccination booking, alert level rules etc. but it is not the go-to source for every-day updates
- Those interviewed viewed themselves as a primary influencers amongst their family and friends, willing to have difficult conversations respectfully or to call people/challenge peoples' engagement non-official sources



“I’ll check the news – news hub or stuff – a couple of times a day, in the morning when I start work and during quiet time for the lunchtime numbers – now that we’re a bit further into it I will look more like 2x a day.”

“I limit myself – Sometimes I’ll check stuff or the herald in the morning, but I don’t seek anything out until later in the day when I know the press conference has happened so I can get it all in one hit, and I’ll generally go to stuff or the herald for that one hit. The only time I actively listen to anything from Jacinda Ardern and whatnot is when it’s a 4-o clock one about alert level changes.”

“RNZ notifications, straight information, no interpretation or commentary, or Pollyanna delusional optimism. There’s a balance between keeping people hopeful and positive and just being delusional or that disregards the negative impacts such as job losses, not being able to see dying family etc.”



European specific themes

Trust in Government

- Even where there is dissatisfaction with how things have been handled, trust in the government is high overall
- Where this is seen to impact adherence to rules and access to support, this high level of trust has a positive effect, increasing adherence and access
- That said, some see trust in government and compliance with public health advice as two distinct/unrelated matters
- There is some feeling that the government have not been as transparent as they could be
- There is a desire for likely decisions to be disclosed once they are likely, rather than waiting until things are 100% certain (e.g. we knew by day three that the lockdown would likely be longer than one week and its should have been indicated that we would likely be in lockdown for a month or longer, appreciation for disclosing that Auckland would likely maintain a border even if we shift to L2)
- There is awareness of and appreciation for the government trying to avoid stigmatising language and being respectful in discussion of vaccinations and people who have been infected
- It has also been noted that the use of the COVID press releases to share other political decisions or impacts can come across as distasteful and self-congratulatory



“I do trust my current government, but I think that’s to do with some key people in that party, because I haven’t always trusted labour.”

“On the whole I trust our government, I do believe they have our best interests at heart, however I think the hangover of Jacinda-mania has led to a little bit of complacency on the government’s part in terms of how accountable they need to be and how open they need to be to the possibility they’re not always right, they haven’t been as transparent as they could, and I think they are using the situation to pat themselves on the back”.

“Jacinda has a team of people with specialist knowledge, she’s not making the decisions by herself, so I do have faith in them, and I believe they have our wellbeing and best interests at heart. I don’t think any of the parties don’t. we all want to get out of this. ”

“Yes, in general I do trust the government, 90%, I’ve always got a margin, whether I think they’re making the right decisions, harking back to what I said about the cost/benefit of the lockdown...”





“I don’t think [my level of trust] affects [how I engage with COVID-19 and supports], its separate for me.

“Because I do have a high level of trust it does make it easier for me to follow the rules and because I know they have our best interests in mind.”

“More transparency, openness, and keeping it about the actual Covid outbreak and keeping other political agenda pout of it.”

“So the test for me around human rights will be what they do when they open the border when people are vaccinated/unvaccinated, that’s where the human rights stuff will become salient and have longer term implications. The whole idea of a vaccination passport fills me with dread, we don’t do that with any other illness. And that does bother me about the labour government because it feels like they avoid that because they don’t want to be seen to be the bad guys, which makes me worried, cause then it will up to national and imagine what they would do with it!”



European specific themes

Vaccinations

- All are either fully or partially vaccinated, and where partially vaccinated they are registered for their second shot
 - Hesitancy was discussed by most and was caused by
 - health conditions (either for themselves or a partner)
 - wanting to wait and see what the impacts/side-effects were
 - Personal experience/awareness of under-reporting of negative impacts (one interviewee lost a brother in-law; he had underlying health conditions, but the stress of the immune response to the vaccine exacerbated these and he died within 4 days, not reported as a vaccine related death)
 - distrust of the medical institution and the overemphasis on biomedical wellbeing and approaches
 - Freedom of choice
- Hesitancy was overcome through:
 - Consultation with medical professionals
 - Awareness of colleagues who couldn't/wouldn't take the vaccine and a need to protect self from them due to underlying health conditions
 - Desire to protect others, especially children, vulnerable people
 - Desire to get out of lockdown
 - NZ being "last off the rank"

European specific themes

Vaccinations

- There is a need for more information about how the vaccine may impact those with different underlying health conditions (though it was also acknowledged that seeking advice from a doctor/specialist who knows the person and their medical history well is the best option, and that is what was done)
- Most only trust information about vaccines from people with recognised expertise in a relevant field (immunologists, medical doctors, genetic scientists) and are wary of conspiracy theory sources, personal anecdotes, and anti-vaccine rhetoric, though there is some tolerance for the experiences and anecdotes of friends where the experience is immediate (i.e., not “a friend of a friend”)



“I did sit on the fence for a brief moment because I wasn’t sure about the side effects because I have a heart condition and so I sought out information from the people who know about my specific condition.”

“Both of us were hesitant, and what made us change our minds was that no-one had turned into zombies yet. What actually changed our mind was NZ being last off the rank, so it felt like there was enough evidence that it was safer than not for most people, so the length of time before we started our rollout, watching US, UK, Europe etc. and not seeing massive spikes in deaths and side effects. So, for me that was a big thing, I don’t know that I would have been brave enough if we were first.”

“In my team we have two anti-vaxxers, someone who has had an allergic reaction to vaccines, a pregnant woman, so when my boss relayed that to me, I couldn’t rely on them, that had a huge impact on my decision to actually get vaccinated.”



European specific themes

Future – coming months

There is widespread anxiety, uncertainty, nervousness, and a general sense of pessimism about the coming months.

People are worried about:

- Having to close their businesses
- Financial stability
- The impact on work roles and delivering face-to-face services (e.g. health promotion, psychological services)
- The impact on education
- Potential loss of life amongst unvaccinated people
- The impact on human rights and civil liberties
- What the plan is once elimination is no longer the primary strategy
- The wellbeing impact of prolonged disconnection from friends and family
- New varieties of the virus and their impact
- Ongoing need for boosters/further vaccination
- The health system not being able to cope

European specific themes

Future – coming months

People are hoping for:

- Greater vaccination uptake
- Borders to open
- Increased tourism
- Being able to spend time with friends and family (in Auckland, other parts of the country, and overseas)
- Travel
- Concerts
- Getting their hair done
- More affordable MIQ options

By and large people don't know what to expect, and don't feel as though they can plan for the future.

That said, there are a few expectations about what might happen next, including the abandonment of the elimination strategy, the opening of borders, the implementation of longer-running public health measures, further lockdowns (maybe less strict or suburb by suburb).



“I do have a worry about what is our plan as a nation for when COVID is in the community because I don’t see how it won’t be when one infected person with Delta has led to all this. When are we gonna start hearing about the way life will look when elimination is no longer the objective. What is the plan from a public health perspective?”

“To be honest, a bit nervous, because we’re not sure what’s happening to Auckland and the uncertainty about what will be the new normal. Wew orry life will never be the same.”

“I’m nervous because delta came in and changed the game, and then what about when delta’s cousin comes in and changes the game again?”

“I think it’s the, feeling a little bit not hopeless, but pessimistic about how it’s going”

“Yeah, I think that we might close the gym and it’s probably because of the lockdowns.”

“I’m worried about how the vaccine rollout is gonna go, people say “let’s let those who want it go get it and open up”, but for those of us in the health equity space that’s not how we want t approach it. I do have fears about what will happen if we open up and we have inequitable vaccine uptake.”



Noteworthy:

- Super Saturday considered a success in mobilising some vaccine hesitant



SUMMARY

Key Findings

ALERT LEVELS INCLUDING AUCKLAND'S 3-STEPS TO LEVEL 3

- Step changes were unclear to almost everyone interviewed
- Some became increasingly familiar after seeking further clarification (e.g., 10 people per outdoors catch-up)
- Confusion is adding to the ambiguity of what the overall strategy is (is government moving away from elimination without stating that this is what's happening?).

COMPLIANCE

- Still difficult when wanting to see family and friends
- Most people are scanning but easy to forget phone or forget to scan every time – a few raised privacy concerns with manual input
- Most interviewed are wearing a mask and some indicated they will continue to wear a mask

WHAT WOULD HELP

- Providing further examples of what can/can't do that resonates better with range of families
- Utilising multiple mediums including posters, businesses, community groups and ethnic-specific channels

WEBSITE

- Most don't check it regularly = only visit it if need more information but rely on updates, social media, news sites etc

FAMILIARITY OF UAC COMMS

- Black and yellow signage is familiar
- Advertisements across social media, YouTube, TV etc.

SUMMARY

Key Findings

TRUST

- Most trust the government even if they believe there are political agendas.
- There are a range of trusted sources, not much consistency
- Those who do not trust the government were not forthcoming with their views (a trust thing)

INFO SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

- Wide range of behaviours: Some once a day for Covid-fatigued; Others 3-4 times a day

INFLUENTIAL SOURCES

- Within families: a wide range of key influencers – often parents/elders/partner
- Among friends: many avoid talking about Covid – often not one single influencer – they go on to hear each other out UNLESS they all share same values/views
- Community: church and iwi leaders (Otherwise are usually channels of advice but not always key influencers for change)
- Employment: Some are key influencers as have policies they need to adhere to so want to keep job – many good examples of good supportive employers

MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

- Parents, Children, Family
- Wanting to travel
- Employment

SUMMARY

Key Findings

FUTURE:

- Weary, tired, uncertain, hopeful, more nervous
- Concerns about children's schooling, employment and income
- Difficulty planning for the coming months
- Most hoping for lesser restrictions by Christmas to spend time with their loved ones

WELLBEING & SUPPORT

- Relationships – wanting to see family – children seeing friends. Community, friendship and family interactions kept up through group chats and online mediums.
- Impact on children and student progress (not much of a school holiday)
- Ongoing need for a range of resources and supports among families across all population groups. Noting that Asian researchers highlighting that they are finding more people in need of emergency financial support, food parcels and essential items

SUMMARY

Key Considerations

- Provide clarity on overall strategy and if elimination is no longer the goal which most suspect, then articulate this clearly. This uncertainty adds extra anxiety when case numbers increase.
- Be clear on step changes for level 3 and the reasons for having these steps (same implications for the framework to be presented on Friday).
- A very wide range of information sources demonstrates the importance of continuing to work with multiple channels and community groups. There is no one formula for swaying the vaccine hesitants but key influences are talking to trusted sources, fear of losing a job and the ability to travel
- Continue to support employers who are providing effective support for their employees – highlight their stories and narratives from perspective of employer and employee. Most people interviewed feel their employers are understanding of their household challenges during higher alert levels.
- Consider impacts on health and wellbeing (reiterated in earlier reports) and the nature of supports needed across our population groups



Essential Workers Survey Results

**See link attached – Full report available
next week**

