



Community Panel Meeting Minutes

Date	2 March 2022
Time	6.00-8.00pm
Venue	Zoom
Attendees	Api Talemaitoga, Aram Kim, Callum Woodhouse, Hasfa Ahmed, Michelle Mascoll, Margaret Brown, Sarah Sparks, Martin Rodgers (DPMC), Louise Cox (DPMC), Amber Bill (DPMC), Rory McKenzie (DPMC), ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} (DPMC), Megan Stratford (DPMC)
Chair	Sarah Sparks
Minute taker	Louise Cox
Apologies	Anthony Taueki, Jordon Milroy

Items 1-3: Welcome and confirmation of minutes

1. Sarah opened the meeting with a karakia, welcomed the Community Panel (the Panel) members and other attendees.
2. The minutes from the 2 February 2021 meeting were confirmed.

Item 4: Updates and responses to questions raised with agencies

Refer Supplementary information for the meeting on 2 March 2022, dated 28 February 2022

3. Martin acknowledged the information on High Risk Countries and the Traveller Health Declaration provided to the Panel, and noted that the completion of the feedback sessions planned for the Traveller Health Declaration had been delayed, thereby delaying the update to the Panel.
4. He noted that the questions put to the Ministry for Primary Industries are in progress and the responses will be circulated when we receive them. The Ministry of Education has also been invited to provide follow up information following the discussion at the last meeting.
5. Members reflected back to the Panel on their experiences participating in feedback sessions and noted their feedback including:
 - a. difficulties in following the declaration document even as a native English speaker
 - b. that different ethnic naming customs may not fit the template
 - c. potential issues with uploading the documents.

6. The following points were raised regarding the communications challenges for rural areas in particular reflecting that:
 - a. there are continued challenges with digital communications for the elderly population, noting that they often don't have access to computers and are slower to digest information communicated through radio
 - b. community libraries are good points of information but that there are not many rural libraries anymore
 - c. many people are staying at home rather than going into town where they may have better access to information
 - d. farming magazines are a potential avenue for promulgating COVID-19 related information to the rural sector.
7. Sarah reflected that there are opportunities for media partnerships that are trusted voices in communities.

Item 5: Update on the shift to the next stage of response to Omicron

Refer FAQs – Omicron Response 24 February

8. Calvin gave an overview of the messaging and campaigns in train to support the move to the next phase of the Omicron response.
9. He noted that there was a rapid shift to Phase 3, which has necessitated the quick dissemination of as much information as possible to people to support readiness for what to do and expect.
10. There was discussion with the Panel that covered:
 - a. clarification of access to government funded RATs and costs to purchase, including the communications opportunities to prevent stockpiling by those with enough money to do so and instead ensure those who need them will have access
 - b. the difficulties caused by the change in messaging from officials on the utility of RATs (from unsuitable to primary testing modality) and the inability for general practices and community providers to frontload these resources in anticipation of coming need
 - c. the challenges for those who are not technologically savvy to manage the increased digital or technological steps with the shift to RATs and more individual responsibility, and the risks that people with COVID-19 are not getting picked up by the system because of this.
 - d. consistent delays with communications for the disabled communities and disabled Māori and Pasifika in particular.
 - i. The Panel raised that:
 - a. this is causing high levels of anxiety
 - b. disabled Māori need to be treated the same as other Treaty partners
 - c. they are interested to explore how this forum can be used to connect in with the right people in the system.
 - ii. Calvin noted the challenges in this area and indicated he is interested in further feedback. Sarah indicated she will send further information through the DPMC

Secretariat. Rory raised the challenges with alternate reading formats and frequently changing information. Sarah agreed to discuss this further offline.

- e. higher levels of anxiety being experienced when working through the online reporting forms and the absence of reassuring messages. This was noted as a lesson from the Christchurch earthquake that has not been picked up. Calvin acknowledged the point and noted that the focus was on ensuring people understand what to do and that reassurance through messaging will come after
- f. the suggestion to have a simpler English style used in communications for those who speak English as a second language
- g. the importance of connecting and integrating with communities including their own communications experts. Martin noted the Ministry of Ethnic Communities work and opportunities for the Panel members to support their kaupapa.

Item 6: Update on COVID-19 disinformation and online harms

Refer COVID-19 Disinformation and online harms - brief to Community Panel 2 Mar 22

- 11. s9(2)(g)(ii) spoke to a presentation that traversed the disinformation landscape and common narratives in Aotearoa New Zealand, what is being done to counter disinformation, guiding communications and engagement principles and the use of an approach informed by manaakitanga.
- 12. Sarah invited the Panel members to share their thoughts. The Panel provided feedback and held discussion across the following areas:
 - a. The programme of work is coming late in the piece as mis and disinformation trends were seen in 2020. This was acknowledged by s9(2)(g)(ii) who noted that there is still work that can be done and opportunities to get ahead of the disinformation machine.
 - b. Opportunities to use stories from the ground as a powerful tool where they can be used in a positive frame. s9(2)(g)(ii) advised that there are engagement specialists working with Māori communities to help tell the stories in voices people know and trust.
 - c. The role of the online environment and platforms such as Telegram where content is not moderated for accuracy and cultivate echo chambers that reinforce mis and disinformation. s9(2)(g)(ii) noted that DPMC is not targeting those at the extreme end of the scale but are focusing on communities and those who are more vulnerable as well as broader society.
 - d. Tailoring messages to different genders to recognise that different genders can think in different ways and that mis and disinformation often has gendered characteristics or targets such as misogyny or emotive language aimed at pregnant women.
 - e. Mis and disinformation can fill a gap when there is a delay in information and there is a need for pace to mitigate this. The Panel suggested that New Zealand could link in with other governments where they have produced good video content and use these to link people who look to their country of origin to help fill the gap where there is a delay in producing culturally and linguistically adapted videos.
 - f. How information is circulated and recognising that ethnic communities in particular will use different platforms (e.g. WeChat).

- g. The concept of 'COVID-19 for the second time' which is missing from the narrative landscape presented by ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)}, but is prevalent among the youth demographic. ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} raised that she is interested to hear more about what youth are saying and noted the narratives about natural immunity and that Omicron is perceived as less virulent.

Item 7: Discussion on the approach to COVID-19 management post the Omicron wave

Refer The future of New Zealand's response to COVID-19

13. Megan introduced the review that was underway to look at the public health settings and briefly spoke to the slides sent before the meeting.
14. She was keen to have an open discussion with the Panel and was particularly interested in the members views on gathering limits.
15. Panel members shared their observations on a range of areas including that:
 - a. there is a lack of official guidance around young people participating in activities with some being excluded due to venue limits
 - b. there has been a drop off in people participating in face to face faith service, particularly in larger venues, and practices have changed e.g. no singing or socialising afterwards
 - c. Pacific churches in Auckland were supportive of conducting online services during Delta and have been encouraged to continue with this
 - d. general practices have completely changed the way they operate with no use of waiting rooms, more online consultations etc., which has raised barriers to accessing care and caused anger in some cases
 - e. it will take time for people to return to previous ways of doing things and, in recognition of this, future communications should focus on reassurance and encouraging people to reconnect through their whānau, faith and other community networks
 - f. people with underlying health conditions will feel extremely exposed if protection measures are reduced, so there needs to be a proper risk assessment around their needs and access to resources eg face masks
 - g. the distance and space has helped people in rural communities feel safe, and they are limiting their trips into population centres
 - h. this has had the effect of limiting opportunities for young people to socialise, which has led to feelings of isolation.
16. Sarah thanked Megan for the opportunity to provide input into the current thinking and invited members to share any further feedback through the Secretariat.

Item 8: Closing remarks and karakia

17. The meeting closed at 8.00pm with a closing karakia from Aram.