

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Inquiry into Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Written Question on Notice, 29 January 2021

PDR Number: IQ21-000024

Communication strategies to reach diverse communities

Written

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Question:

What tailored communications strategies is the Government using to reach diverse communities?

Answer:

- The Australian Government is committed to making critical COVID-19 public health information available to everyone, particularly the most vulnerable members of our community.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communications Strategy

- The Australian Government's COVID-19 vaccination public information campaign was launched on 27 January and is rolling out across the country.
- \$1.3 million has been provided for peak multicultural organisations to help reach culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.
- In partnership with the whole of government media buying agency, the Department of Health (the Department) has developed community engagement strategies to reach culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, and is implementing a targeted promotional campaign to increase engagement with multicultural communities and provide coordinated, consistent messaging across all jurisdictions.
- The national Vaccine Campaign includes advertising translated in 32 languages for multicultural audiences across radio, print and social media (this includes WeChat and Weibo) and are available on the health website. The department is also exploring other social media channels to reach for multicultural communities.

- A Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities COVID-19 Health Advisory Group has been established to support the Australian Government to coordinate an evidence-based response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a subset of the Advisory Group, a COVID-19 Communications Working Group has been established. The Working Group supports the development and distribution of COVID-19 information by providing insights and recommendations on communication with multicultural audiences.
- With the assistance of the Advisory Group, a series of multicultural round tables has been established to hear from leaders and representatives of multicultural communities about their views on effective communication pathways with their communities. Roundtables have been recently hosted by the department with multicultural community and religious leaders, multicultural youth, women, health practitioners and representatives of refugee and migrant communities. Further engagement with the participants will continue over the course of the vaccines roll-out.
- The Department of Health's website has 63 dedicated in language pages.
- A range of non-advertising resources for multicultural communities have been developed, including radio and print editorials, videos with information on COVID-19 vaccinations and how to stay informed, a video development guide for community leaders to film their own videos, in-language web content, social media posts, posters, newsletter articles.
- The department is also working in collaboration with the state and territory health departments, the Department of Home Affairs and Services Australia's Community Liaison Officers to provide information and content to communities and their various networks to help communicate directly with communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communications Strategy

- A Communications Working Group has been established as a subset of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19, to support the development of COVID-19 vaccines communication materials and ensure all assets are culturally safe and appropriate. The co-chairs are the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the department, supported by state-based affiliates, Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) and other Indigenous organisations.
- The members of this subgroup are actively involved in providing cultural insights and reviewing materials as well as supporting the dissemination of information to their networks and communities. This collaboration is ongoing and will continue throughout the pandemic and vaccine roll-out.
- The national COVID-19 Vaccines campaign advertising materials have been adapted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including the creation of custom designs and relevant resources by using the specially designed Indigenous artwork.
- Campaign materials include key audio materials translated into 15 Indigenous languages. Indigenous channels are being utilised including TV, radio, social and print along with a radio partnership with First Nations Media to broadcast a monthly bulletin updating the audience of the rollout and vaccination information. The content is translated into the 6 top Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

- A suite of information resources continue to be developed for Indigenous audiences. This includes regular stakeholder kits with examples of newsletter articles and editorials, video scripts, social media content, and posters. The kit has been sent to a broad range of stakeholders to be shared with their communities and networks. This kit was updated and redistributed as a result on the recent Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) update.
- The Department is working with the Indigenous public relations agency, creating additional materials such as case study videos, spokesperson videos, animations, social media content and radio content. The Department has also created templates that can be adapted and used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to extend the reach of the communication activities.
- A webpage with specific vaccine-related information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is available with all relevant information and resources.
- A regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newsletter is being distributed to over 750 stakeholders. This provides updates on the vaccine rollout, COVID-19 and other health alerts related to this audience.
- An Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) kit was developed and distributed prior to the rollout of 1b. This provides support to the vaccine provider, such as banner templates, posters and social tiles.