

Qualitative work into barriers and information needs

Initial Findings

DPMC

Requirement

Understand potential barriers to compliance in the current L4 situation

Assess information needs and gaps and how they could be filled.

How

Qualitative telephone interviews (20-30 minutes long) with a cross-section of the population.

21 qualitative telephone interviews conducted over Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 August.

A good mix across

- Māori
- Pasifika
- Other ethnicities (Chinese/Indian)
- Auckland, rest of North Island, South Island
- Youth – 18 -25
- Lower socio
- Disabled, those with disabled people in their bubbles
- A few who are not on board with L4 requirements.

Framing

Helping MOH/government communicate clearly, and understand other ways they need to help people over this period.

Key information areas

- What support or information do people need
- What are people worried about
- Vaccine – feelings, barrier, concerns, information
- Barriers – anything that is stopping them complying in lockdown or having a test etc. – i.e. families, dependents need to visit, disability, etc

Findings

Where are people at?

- Although people had less time to adjust, in terms of dealing with the current level four lockdown, people feel more psychologically prepared and less anxious this time around.

“Everyone seems to be coping ok, we’ve been here before, we know what to do and how to get out of it” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

“It happened quite fast and I was overwhelmed as a single mother with two children but luckily I had just done a grocery shop so we are ok for food” Māori Female, Manawatu

“I’m annoyed but we’re ok and it was inevitable” Chinese Male Auckland

“We have a very big bubble and we are fine, the children are enjoying it and we know the routine this time, we have church online and Zumba online and everyone has their own device” Samoan Male, Auckland

“It’s been better than last year, kind of been here before, but if it was three weeks or so I would break down and cry, it’s been a nightmare stuck at home with my son who is a very hyper-active boy” Pakeha Female, Wellington

- Part of this is the hope that this lockdown will be short and sharp, so many people are appreciating the rest from the daily grind and are happy to wait and see but for Aucklanders especially the novelty has worn off and it’s all just a big inconvenience.
- Most people expect the lock down to be extended by a week and followed by regional differences in levels.

“The novelty has worn off for us, we know what to do and not to do, before it was an emotional roller coaster but now we know there is an end in sight” Māori Female Auckland

- This emotional acceptance has been shaped strongly by the alarming spread of Delta in Australia.

“It was the right thing to do because Delta is worse than Covid so it’s justified and we’re more familiar now about what’s required, we just worry about how long we won’t see each other” Pacifica Female Wellington

“We’re all pretty well, it’s frustrating, we have to let go of the usual rules, we’re more lenient and we’ve established a little routine, screen time, movies, walk” Māori Female Auckland

“I’m not too fussed, you get frustrated and there’s not much to do but all my friends and flatmates are fine” Young African Female Waikato

“It’s ok, most of us are still working at home but I’m bored and there is less open this time but Delta is more contagious so I get it” Young Thai Female Auckland

South Islanders feel slightly more relaxed but also feel that it is inevitable that cases will appear down south.

“It’s the right thing to do but in the South Island but it feels different because there’s no points of interest, I went online and couldn’t find any so I am confused, things seem quite lax down here, there’s no police out, there seems to be lots of traffic on the roads, its mixed messages” Young Māori female Otago

“We have it pretty good in the South Island, people gather around and support each other and work together” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

What are the attitudes and barriers to compliance?

- While some people may grumble about aspects of timing of the lockdown, politics or interpretations of ‘the facts’, no one in the research disputed the efficacy and need for the lockdown or the compliance measures.

“We’re on to it, we listen to the PM and the health board and follow the rules” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

“It’s the right thing to do, I’m just not sure if it’s sustainable” Other Asian, Female, Hawkes Bay

“It’s not too bad, its unnerving wearing masks, it feels like a breach of our personal freedoms and I have asthma so it’s not easy, I’m concerned

about the direction the country is going in, maybe the country is being too cautious, I try not to think about it ” Pakeha Female Auckland Disability

“It’s good, we don’t want to see the Ozzie thing where there are brawls, and anti-Vac thing and an explosion of cases... we have to be more vigilant with Delta” Maori Male, Auckland, Disability

- People’s ‘top of mind’ compliance measures are the ones most pertinent to them but they can reel off the others when asked.
 - Stay at home, stay in your bubble
 - Wear masks when outside the house
 - 2 metre / social distancing
 - Essential workers only out and about

- Less mentioned spontaneously: sanitising hands, using the tracer app, no exercising on playground equipment, calling Healthline if you are sick

- There were some strains but no barriers to compliance measures.

“The struggle is more mental than physical, we can’t talk over the fence to neighbours so we find creative ways to connect with others” Māori Female Auckland

“No one is keeping to 2 metres in the supermarkets, some of them don’t even have 2 metre distance markings when you are waiting outside” Indian Male, Auckland

“I get claustrophobic with a mask on but I just don’t go out” Young African Female Waikato

- **Arranging childcare can mean compromising safety but needed for parent’s mental health**

“My son’s father has taken my son for the day, and he has more people in his bubble which I don’t feel happy about but I need the break, it’s about mental capacity” Māori Female, Manawatu

- **Masks expensive**

“Masks cost a lot, we have been reusing disposable ones is that ok? Young African Female Waikato

“Masks are too expensive and so is sanitiser, there has been price gouging, the Government should stop that” Indian Male, Auckland

- **Asthma**

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- Everyone understands mask wearing in supermarkets but there is some confusion about where else to wear masks

“Someone told me that you have to wear masks in the car?” Pacifica Female Wellington

“It’s hard when you see others outside and not wearing masks, I though wearing masks in public was mandatory” Māori Female Auckland

- **And a question;**
 - What happens in an emergency if we need the doctor?

What are people worried about and what support do they need?

- The research conversations were conducted on day four and five of lockdown so many people felt fine, they have slipped into behaviours established in the last level four lockdown especially keeping in touch with others; facetimeing, ringing, texting, group chats, shared screen movie watching, online church services.

“We group chat about what we are eating and face time at dinner” Pacifica Female Wellington

- People are definitely more worried about Delta and are more cautious than last level four lockdown especially if they have children or people with compromised immune systems in their households.

Parents with young children with behavioural challenges especially struggling and want essential items to include children’s activities and care products

- The immediate and most apparent strain is caring for the needs of babies (nappies) and entertaining young children and especially children with behavioural challenges. Parents want children’s activities like puzzles, memory games, board games etc and babies needs like nappies to be put on the essential items list for delivery.

“I’ve had issue trying to get nappies, we need a nappy delivery, are they doing that” Pakeha Female Auckland Disability

“My stress levels are well out the gate because I am forever trying to find things for my 5-year-old with autism to do, and I run out of ideas, I need to be able to buy memory games and puzzles these should be on the essential items list” Māori Female, Manawatu

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“Last year the Ministry of Education sent us packs for preschool, we were given ideas and resources and also we could get paints and things but there seems to be nothing like that this time” Pakeha Female, Wellington

- **Behavioural resources are urgently need for some**

“My 5 year old has autism and can’t cope with changes in routines and he has had massive outbursts which have been hard to control and I have had to renew a antipsychotic script for him to help manage his explosions, we haven’t heard anything form school about what to do, we need resources and guidance about how to continue his routine, he has mental health counselling but we haven’t heard from them either” Māori Female, Manawatu

- **Getting on the supermarket websites for grocery delivery can be an anxious time**

“I have been trying to do the click and deliver as I can’t leave the children to do grocery shopping but its hard getting on their website, I keeping refreshing the page and nothing happens” Māori Female, Manawatu

Financial concerns bite deeply for younger parents

“We are fine, but I see my granddaughter and her children struggling, she has panic attacks and her husband is now on 80% of his wage on the subsidy, and her children have behavioural issues, she used to come here every day but now she can’t we ring her to keep an eye on her” Pakeha Male, Levin, disability

Support from some employers is shaky

“I hate the fact that I am working twice as hard and risking more as an essential worker but getting no more money” Indian Male, Auckland

“My husband got sick and it’s not covid and the MOH says don’t go to work if you’re sick but he doesn’t have any sick leave and his boss won’t let him convert it to annual leave so we’re not sure what the rules are” Pakeha Female, Wellington

Confusion around childcare for essential workers

- There is confusion and difficulty around childcare for essential workers – how to access and where to get information about what is available and how to merge bubbles if you are using family members to help out.

- The frustration is that the information on the websites was ‘from last year’

Pressures on food for some – looking for micro local online networks and info sources

- Some people are limiting their exposure by stretching their food to ensure less grocery runs, others are seeing food disappear twice as quickly because everyone is at home, others with financial pressures are contemplating where and how to get help. In this regard there have been suggestions of the need for smaller more localised online hubs and networks.
- People who can help want direction as to how and where they can help

“I wish the rules weren’t so strict around food cupboards, there are lots of families struggling and those of us that can help don’t know how to help, if we could drop off food somewhere that would be good, I also worry about the violence rates that go up – how can we help” Māori Female Auckland
- Others want to know if food banks are operating to seek help
- Some are concerned about family violence and the safety of children and wonder if police are doing welfare checks

Struggle for some with lack of routine and discipline around learning and schooling

“Homes are for relaxing, eating and playing and now we have to bring the school energy into the home, they do homework but now it feels like they are doing homework all day and that is hard” Pacific Female Wellington

“We are having a hard time entertaining and home schooling our children, we are only parents not teachers, we aren’t trained to take care of children, it would be good if there were some programmes or ideas” Chinese Male Auckland

Awareness of maintaining mental health is high especially for young people

“I have friends who have mental health issues and I have depression, so we talk every day and watch movies together using shared screens and face time, I feel that mental health issues are openly talked about now and especially in Christchurch, we have had so many challenging times down here” Young Pakeha Male, Canterbury

Other stresses and strains include lack of personal space

“We all get frustrated because we are in small spaces, my sister sent me a text saying please adopt me, we cope by going for walks, we work as a team and rotate our time” Pacifica Female Wellington

Raised anxiety because Delta is more transmissible

“I am more concerned because it is transmitted through the air more easily so I want to see the points of interest, it brings it closer to home, one man stopped at the BP which is 5 minutes down the road” Māori Male, Auckland, Disability

“We won’t go for walks until level 2, Delta is too contagious” Samoan Male, Auckland

Attitudes and barriers to covid testing

- People are fully on board with being tested if needed. There is a slight apprehension at the perceived discomfort of the nasal swab and potentially long waiting times.
- People wondered if there could be a ‘busy times’ alert for testing stations or smaller venues scattered closer to local communities.

“You hear about people waiting queues for two days” Young Māori Female Otago

- People are relieved that GP’s are now doing testing.
- Transport still an issue for some – people asking for a mobile van or home visit from a nurse

How are people feeling about the vaccine and what do they need to know?

- Most people are completely on board with the need to get vaccinated; they are doing it for themselves, their family and friends and the community at large. All participants were aware that they could get vaccinated in level four.
- Younger people are increasingly getting on board. The fact that younger people are being hit by Delta is hitting hard and changing minds quickly, but they are also confused as to why they are not a priority.

- Some people want to know how vaccinations actually work
- Others what to know what the ingredients in the vaccine are

“I want to know what’s in it and whether we will need a vaccination passport” Pacific Female Wellington

“My mum has had it but what’s in it? I don’t want to be a guinea pig, they haven’t been transparent” Young Thai Female Auckland

What are the barriers to the Vaccine?

- The main functional barriers are child minding and transport – people want to have mobile clinics set up or district health nurse visits

“Getting there will be hard because who will look after the children, we need a community nurse to meet us outside the house, a mobile van” Pacifica Female Wellington

“What do I do if I can’t get care for my kids or get time off work ” Young Māori Female Otago

“It feels disorganised, there is lots of stress with people turning up and being turned away” Other Asian, Female, Hawkes Bay

“There is no way that some of our Pacifica families can get to the Vaccine sites, we need to get the district nurses in or get a mobile clinic operating” Samoan Male, Canterbury

“I will struggle to find childcare and a way to get there, I would love it if someone could come to my home because otherwise, I need to know that there will be someone at the vaccination place to help occupy my son, it would be good to know how the process works and what we need to do with the children” Māori Female, Manawatu

For those who are uncertain, attitudes range across the spectrum from no exposure to facts to an overload of facts.

- Some people are hearing from friends and family rumours about heavy metals, or the prophesy in the Bible when currency has no physical form and there are computer chips in our bodies - the mark of the beast, while others are digging deep into medical literature and questioning the robustness of the vaccine technology.
- Several people were on lonely journeys with their decision making around whether to be vaccinated – they can be at odds with friends and family, and constantly have to remove seeds of doubt so they ‘mute’ family and friends on social media to cope.

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“There is a lot of rumours and discussion on social media and people take bits and pieces and family bring that into our family chat but I say whatever, I do consider it and believe some things because anything could happen, but I don’t want to feed into it...people are worried based on religious beliefs but I see that lots of churches are opening up for vaccinations and that helps...I have friends worrying and dreaming about being injected” Pacifica Female Wellington

“It’s the little rumours that get to me, I’ve removed several friends and pages from my FB feed and I stick to the MOH and the news” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

“Some of these things (conspiracy theories) are written so professionally and well, it sows a seed of doubt” Māori Female, Manawatu

“There are people in my family that are big anti-vaccers, they are doing their own google searches and falling prey to influencers, it’s all about the Government trying to control us and they are trying to depopulate the world by making us sterile, they are choosing to ignore mainstream information, I’ve give up on them, I do my own education...there’s nothing you can do with them...there are lots of positive culturally based initiatives but they are ignoring those too but there’s something surreal about the whole thing, it’s hard to believe until it happens to someone you know” Māori Female Auckland

- At the opposite end of the spectrum is fact overload – here people are waiting to see the impact and side effects but if they are not strong hold outs, the idea that they will need a vaccine passport to travel is enough of an incentive to say yes.

“It’s premature to think we will get rid of the virus and the money spent is enormous, the vaccine gives a false sense of security, people are still getting sick on it and I’ve been looking into the technology, they are using RM (???) its unstable, that hasn’t been fully tested and you’ll only be vaccinated against last year’s Covid strain, you just have to look at what’s happening in Israel and the UK, they should tell the truth, our care system is crap, there is no plan a, b, or c...feels like lies by omission....but if they bring in vaccine passports and that is the only way I can travel then I will get it” Other Asian, Female, Hawkes Bay

One of the biggest areas of confusion, especially when coupled with emotive barriers to the vaccine, is the perception that the vaccine is for Covid not Delta

“The vaccination thing is weird, people are getting the vaccination for Covid but now there’s Delta which is worse so will we need another

stronger vaccine so you think what's the point?" Pacifica Female Wellington

- **Another barrier is the perception that the vaccine is too new and was rushed**

"I'm having to lie to my elderly patients because I don't want to get it, it is too new, it baffles me that they came up with this overnight and yet we have been waiting for a cancer vaccine for years and years, I'm nervous, I want to wait" Young Māori Female Otago

"I probably won't get the vaccine, it hasn't been around long enough for its safety to be proven, as a baby I had a reaction to a vaccine, and I think it will take a while for issues to come to the fore" Pakeha Female Auckland Disability

- **Apprehension about side effects**

"I've heard that the vaccine makes you sick" Pacifica Female Wellington"

"One of my elderly patients got quite ill after having the vaccine and one lost mobility in her legs and they had nausea and headaches, I'm frightened that they will mandate that we have to have a vaccine and I could lose my job, they make it sound like it's this glorious noble thing to do but I want to hear about the side effects" Young Māori Female Otago

"I'm still concerned, there's not enough information about whether it works or not, you hear of the nurse who was fully vaccinated still getting covid, it doesn't give you much confidence" Young Thai Female Auckland

"My friend and I talk about it and we want to wait and see what happens, I get a lot of allergies so I wouldn't jump on board, I will go and see my doctor first" Young African Female Waikato

- **People with vaccine still getting covid**

"What about that nurse who was fully vaccinated, what's that about" Pakeha female Auckland

- **Some wonder why Pacifica and Māori are "more at risk" and want explanations**

"I hate the act that there is scaremongering about Māori that we're more at risk but there's no explanation about why" Young Māori Female Otago

"I'm concerned that people are saying that the Government is not doing enough for Māori, that has not been the issue with this situation: Māori Male, Auckland, Disability

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- **Concern about employer support**

*“What happens is I get the vaccine and I get sick and I have no sick leave, I will wait a year and see what happens....and I am on a migrant visa, what happens to me when this is over, we are needed and wanted then not wanted”
Indian Male, Auckland*

Where are people getting their information and what they want

- Most people are tuning into official channels; the Covid 19 website, the MOH website, the 1pm update, mainstream news outlets. A few people were relying mainly on their FB feed. Pamphlets and information has been abundant through GP’s health care providers etc.

“I listen to mainstream media, before I was obsessed with everything Covid, everyone started to worry themselves and it was overwhelming but now I trust the Government” Pacific Female Wellington

- People are ‘being inundated’ by information from their workplaces. People are heartened that workplaces, councils etc are all saying the same information so at a high level the messaging is “consistent and coherent”.
- When online people are pleased to see so many pop ups regarding Covid reminders and information

“I have a disability remembering things so pop-up son social media really help, I had already forgotten what level four means” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

“The company we work for passes information on to us and so do our churches and we are all getting the same information, that is very helpful and encouraging support”” Samoan Male, Auckland

- **People want quicker access and updates regarding locations of interest**

*“I worry how long it is taking for the MOH to load the points of interest, I’ve been going to that site every half hour to check, there is a long delay between the 1pm session and the locations upload, you feel so uncertain”
Māori Female, Manawatu*

*“The heat map has been good, I find the Covid 19 site too technical, I just want to find out the cases in my area, it would be good to have a tool like on Trademe where you could define a geographic circle of interest then I can decide whether I go for a walk or whether I go to the groceries today”
Chinese Male Auckland*

- **People want greater clarity around what is an essential service and product**

“On different websites, one says yes you can buy this product, and another says no you can’t” Chinese Male Auckland

- **Health act mandatory to get tested if you are a contact – needs more communicating**

“I heard that it was mandatory to get a covid test if you have been identified as a contact, they should communicate this more” Chinese Male Auckland

End of day person summary wrap up suggested – aimed at everyday people not journalists

- There were a few comments from older and younger participants around the need for an end of day wrap up summary aimed ‘ordinary people’. There is a feeling that the 1pm updates are aimed at appeasing journalists so there is a barrage of words and details, when people just want to hear the details pertinent to their household and community quickly.

“We need something later at night to wrap up the day, doesn’t need the PM just a simple breakdown of what’s gone on and who is infected and where because the 1pm update they take so long to get around to saying things, they are talking to the journalists I don’t feel that they are talking to me, I want to hear everyday things about everyday people” Pakeha Male, Levin, disability

- This sentiment applies to the Covid 19 website as well, while people appreciate the technical detail, most people just want to be able to search ‘cases in my local area’ with a ‘what happened today summary.

“The 1pm update has a lot of the information, its long and tedious, they don’t get to the point, is not captivating and so I miss little important things, they do have stuff on tik tok and that’s really cool..maybe a summary of the day on there...all I want to know is when can the other jobs go back to work and when can I buy other things like crafts materials to keep myself busy for my mental health” Young African Female Waikato

“The Covid 19 website is too hard to navigate, it’s too technical and not easily digestible, I want a summary option, a way to limit the information, that helps manage the stress, I want to know what’s the bottom line in my area: Young Pakeha Male, Canterbury

How do people feel if the lockdown continues longer than two weeks?

- Some people expect that this will last for a month.
- The most significant issue is around parents entertaining and managing younger children and finances and teens keeping themselves busy especially in terms of good mental health practices.

“Another month and my family will definitely be getting bored and try and break the rules and go out more” Indian Male, Auckland

- Younger people like the idea of bringing back challenges and games like the first lockdown teddy bears, tik tok challenges and bin decoration

“If it gets extended, I will definitely need to be able to get more PJ’s and crafty things from Kmart, I have depression, my mental health will depend on keeping busy, I’m trying really hard to stay in a good routine, we need some Tik Tok challenges” young African Female Waikato

- Worry about finances will also loom large for some

“I expect the PM will make an announcement about where people can go to get financial help” Korean Female, Canterbury, Disability

“It may be an issue later on, the wage subsidy is a massive help, it would be nice to see if the banks would step up and ask how they can help, a few weeks is ok but if it went on for 5 or 6 that would be a real struggle” Pakeha Female Auckland Disability