

To whom it may concern:

I am gravely concerned about the governmental response to Covid-19, particularly as it relates or related to:

- Personal freedoms
- Bodily autonomy
- Health and wellbeing generally, but particularly those in aged care

Specifically, some of my personal experience of the Covid-19 response was as follows:

- My wife, who works in an aged care setting was required to take an experimental vaccine, prior to the completion of appropriate testing. This vaccine has caused some side-effects, and I am concerned about the long term problems that it may cause. It was taken against her better judgement because our family required her work income. This is a violation of personal freedoms, bodily autonomy, and the lack of appropriately researched testing of the product has led to great stress and concern for both of us.
- I did not take a vaccine, and did contract Covid. As a result of my infection, I was entitled to a temporary vaccine exemption due to natural immunity under the published guidelines. This was especially relevant to me due to the harsh restrictions on personal freedoms in Victoria at the time. Even though I was entitled to receive an exemption, I found that my regular doctor would not provide one, instead strongly encouraging me to be vaccinated.

I had almost given up hope of obtaining the exemption when I was referred to another practitioner by a friend. This doctor knew how to process the exemption and did so promptly and without hesitation on presentation of the required evidence. My doctor had claimed what I was asking wasn't possible, even though I provided him with copies of the information from [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au).

I believe that my doctor was subjected to professional bullying by AHPRA that caused him to be unwilling to process the exemption request for fear of reprisals. What this has done is break my trust in my chosen professional. I now am uncomfortable to return to my doctor as a result of what I perceive as a failure in his professional conduct.

- My mother was in aged care prior to the arrival of Covid-19. Due to federal restrictions and policies instituted at the nursing home in response, I was effectively unable to visit her except for two occasions in a period of around 8 months. Prior to this, I had visited roughly fortnightly with my son.

My mother's condition deteriorated significantly in this time, and based on my

observations and those of the care staff, this was likely accelerated by the lack of familial contact.

The home was very accommodating, but due to Mum's condition and the rules around visits, I was able to manage only one visit mid-2020 between lockdowns, and then a final visit was arranged in the week before Mum's death by which time her deterioration was so far progressed that I can't even be sure that she knew I was there.

After she died, Mum's body was whisked away by funeral directors before I could get to the nursing home to say a final goodbye. Due to restrictions at the time she was cremated without a funeral.

These experiences are obviously a snapshot of a broader experience. "Remote Learning" was a farce, but it did help me to understand the failings of our education system and transition our family to home schooling, so that worked out well enough.

My concern is the ease with which so many liberties were taken by government authorities in a short space of time, in response to a threat which by any reasonable measure was not as severe as we were led to believe. Three weeks to "flatten the curve" (which was perhaps a reasonable and proportionate response to an unknown threat) quickly became something far more. I believe that this marked the most egregious overreach by government seen in my lifetime.

The role of government is to protect and provide for the needs of its people. I believe that the government response to Covid-19 not only failed to protect people from disease (potentially making it worse), but has also caused such damage to people and prosperity that the damage may continue to be felt for the rest of my life. Certainly, we now live under the threat of what government might do in response to future perceived threats.

I implore you to see the harms caused to so many people and make recommendations to uphold personal liberty (including bodily autonomy) and support the activities of a fair and just society.

Yours Sincerely,

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