

15th December 2023

To: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Re: Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry

Dear Officer

I work in the healthcare industry and hold a Bachelor of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I also partially completed a Masters of [REDACTED] including a unit on research design. I am aware of what constitutes good science, and what does not. I am also well versed in how to provide evidence for statements I make. I am, however, short on time, as I only just now discovered the deadline for this submission is tonight. I will, therefore, have to keep this brief, and hope others provide the ample evidence there is for the comments I will make. I am sure I will not be the only person with my points of view.

Firstly, the positives. I believe closing our international borders so quickly, initially, was a wise move. We are an island - making it a feasible option - it was a sensible one in the early stages of the outbreak, whilst we were still learning about it. But we then wasted that precious time, that preparation period. We should have focussed most of our resources on setting up temporary field hospitals (like China did), or building up the capacity of existing hospitals to cope with the expected increase in patient load when we did open up. This may not usually be a Commonwealth role, but I am sure it could have been done, and the money would have been far better spent in preparing that way than wasting it on buying enough vaccines to vaccinate everyone in the country about eight times (or some similar, ridiculous amount).

The other somewhat positive move the Commonwealth government made was providing JobSeeker. I say somewhat because I only mean in comparison to say, the USA. I think if the government is going to have the audacity to ask people not to work, they better pay to support them. But really, our economy should not have been shut down in the way it was, it was a grossly irresponsible act that I intuitively knew from the beginning could only do more harm than good. I personally had a very pleasant time during lockdowns, but I felt for those who I knew would struggle deeply during that time. As it turned out, my instinct was correct - because of the heavily interconnected global economy, lockdowns in Western countries caused food insecurity in developing countries to rise, and we are certainly still feeling the economic costs of lockdowns now (not to mention mental health and child development). Homelessness rose sharply around the country, with families with young children ending up unhoused for the first time in their lives. I will leave this topic here though as it strays into the State's responsibilities.

One aspect of the response I felt particularly personally aggrieved by was the failure of the Commonwealth to protect my Right to Informed Consent before undergoing vaccination. Consent for medical procedures is required in Australia for far less than an invasive experimental gene therapy - I recall having to document it for many occupational therapy interventions during my studies. The Australian Immunisation Handbook requires a medical professional to obtain informed consent before vaccinating a person, but at no time did I give my free consent, nor was I informed (except by own volition). I was only vaccinated due to State-coercion, and although I signed a medical form at the doctor's surgery indicating I did not have any of a list of ailments, it was not presented as a consent form, and I do not consider that consent. No verbal consent was given either.

I do not consider much of the Australian population to have been properly informed about the vaccine, either. Much of what was told to the public by the government was misinformation - such as that the vaccine will stop the virus spreading. I knew this because I looked at the initial [REDACTED] study and it was clearly never designed to determine whether the vaccine stopped viral spread. Its effectiveness at reducing severe illness was also oversold, as [REDACTED] inappropriately used Relative-Risk Reduction to enhance the perception of the result. I knew from my studies in research design that well-designed studies will provide the Absolute-Risk Reduction, as that factors in the risk of the infection to a person, which in this case at the time was low.

I have run out of time to say more, except I wish to say I think the TGA totally failed the Australian public and requires a serious overhaul. The vaccines should have been put through the regulatory approval process for genetic therapies, and they were not, which is scandalous. We are yet to discover what horrible consequences this may have.