

## Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry Evidence

I am providing evidence as an individual who was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 vaccine mandates. I am a [REDACTED] teacher who had my teaching contract terminated as I did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine. There are numerous reasons why I did not get vaccinated, and I have detailed these below as well as the impacts that government decisions had on my overall health and well-being.

A member of my immediate family suffered severe adverse reactions following the COVID-19 vaccinations, hospitalising her for chest pain, abdominal pain, slurred speech, nausea, delirium, tachycardia. She was kept in for monitoring for over 12 hours on each occasion and referred to a cardiologist after the first admission. After visiting GP's, and an immunologist myself, to consider my own medical history and adverse reactions to my immediate family member, they could not tell me that it was safe to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

I conducted months of research on various COVID-19 vaccines, collating efficacy, safety and vaccine injury data from across the world to make an informed health decision. Using government, health, and statistics sites, I concluded that the best treatment for COVID-19 was contracting the disease and developing natural immunity (Powe, 2022; Queensland Health, 2022), especially when immunity efficacy data for vaccines was not high and boosters were required.

When evidence and experts could not safely prescribe the COVID-19 vaccine for myself, I decided it was not safe to receive it and as a result, I was terminated from my teaching position [REDACTED]. I requested a further term's unpaid leave as I knew the mandates would be lifted, however this was not accommodated. I lost income, my identity as a teacher, my friends, support network at school and was isolated from my social circles in community. The government then removed the mandate halfway through the year and I could teach again. This shows that the mandate wasn't necessary; it was simply a scare tactic to force as many people to comply with a government recommendation that was not based on science but on the money that had been committed to big pharma companies for the vaccines.

The most concerning part of the Commonwealth's response to COVID-19 was not the vaccine mandates, the lockdowns, the restrictions on living, but the propaganda and misinformation spread across mainstream media to control the population. It is cowardly, and a complete lack of responsibility to best serve the community. In a health emergency, the government should be discerning and critical about the information passed down by big pharma about safety, efficacy and side effects rather than 'taking their word for it' because they are 'health experts'. Every day, in my job as a Health and Physical Education teacher, I try to enhance the health literacy of my students, yet when the Health Department of the government cannot critically evaluate the health information being provided, they completely compromise the health literacy of the nation. The excessive purchase of vaccines by the Australian Government from big pharma (126 million Pfizer, 28 million Moderna, 53.5 million Astra Zenaca, plus Novovax and Covax) (Department of Health and Aged Care,

2023) is an obvious example of money ruling government choices rather than scientific information. When the Australian population is only 25,690,000, it is clear that the doses purchased were either not effective (Davis, 2022; Lackey, 2022) and therefore boosters are needed, or that the pharmaceutical companies made a highly profitable deal with the Australian Government, and now the Health Department has to use up the doses and encourages the boosters, so as to not be seen to waste money. Either way, the vaccine did not protect community against COVID-19, the community lost faith and trust in the government, and taxpayers suffer due to the added debt accumulated.

The fear mongering from the government is another disgrace during the COVID-19 response. It tried to divide the nation by blaming COVID-19 transmission on those that chosen not to get vaccinated, yet in many countries, including Australia, COVID-19 spread more once the un-vaccinated were restricted in terms of socialisation and employment (Durden, 2021; Queensland Health, 2022). For most of the population, COVID-19 was no more life threatening than the flu, yet the exaggerated response from the government left people confused, scared and in a state of ill-health mentally, socially and financially. The government response to a health emergency must be considered for the overall health of a nation, a state, or a local government area. Lockdowns, social distancing, mask requirements, vaccination mandates, changing health information each week (if not, each day) was severely detrimental to the health of the nation, meanwhile, the physical health of those that contracted COVID-19 was mostly mildly negative for up to a week (Matthews, 2021). Personally, I did not socialise with friends for months due to COVID-19 vaccine pass requirements, I wasn't able to travel to the UK or New Zealand to see family and felt isolated and the loneliest I had ever felt in 38 years.

The government offered financial support of those that could not work due to businesses closing or for those that had lost their jobs, however I was 'not eligible' for government support as I had savings. I had scrupulously saved over five years to purchase my first home, and then I was told that because I had money in the bank, I wasn't able to receive regular income to cover rent, bills and basic living expenses through government support. It was heart-wrenching to dip into the money I had so carefully saved to buy groceries and pay the rent. When I finally returned to teaching, I was no longer able to buy a property.

I urge the COVID-19 Response Inquiry Panel to consider the lack of consideration of human rights, particularly the choice of what to put in your body for health, from the government at a Commonwealth, Federal and State level. The so-called physical health response did not place any emphasis on mental, social or emotional health, yet we are expected to teach the importance of all dimensions of health in the Australian Curriculum. What the government called the 'answer' (COVID-19 vaccination) to prevent transmission and provide immunity was not effective and was a significant waste of taxpayer money.

## References

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