



HCCA - Consumer experiences of  
looking for information about COVID-19  
(65+years)

## **Report from HCCA Survey 1 – COVID-19**

**Subset – 65+yrs**

**Consumer experiences of looking for  
information about COVID-19  
(Coronavirus)**

24 March 2020

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## Executive Summary

- HCCA Survey 1 – *Consumer experience of looking for information about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)* ran from Friday 20 March to Monday 23 March (approx. 60hrs)
  - The total number of respondents was 243 people. Most were from the ACT (89%) with 11% from surrounding areas in NSW. The survey population contained more women and people in the 55-75yrs age group, and fewer in the 18-35yrs age group, than compared with 2016 ACT Census data.
  - HCCA recognises that health information and advice on COVID-19 is changing rapidly, and that this may have had an impact on the data collected across the survey period.
  - This report provides detail about survey responses, particularly **focusing on the subset of those aged 65+years**, including questions identified by consumers that they do not feel are being answered in current communications. While evidence-based answers to these questions may be available, the responses suggest a lack of clear access for consumers to information in certain areas.
  - From the total survey respondents, main sources of information tended to be websites (82%) or radio (42%). Of those using websites, the common responses were:
    - Online news websites (60%)
    - Australian Government Department of Health COVID-19 website (51%)
    - ACT Health COVID-19 website (44%)
    - Facebook (33%)
- Other internet sites mentioned included covid19data.com.au, websites connected to particular health organisations or health conditions, news media (particularly ABC and SBS) and online podcasts including ABC's Coronacast.
- Key issues raised included:
    - Comments reflected fear and uncertainty from some consumers about the lack of clear advice about what they should be doing right now, in day-to-day life, to protect themselves and their community.
    - Consumers in the ACT and surrounds are seeking information about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) that is:
      - clear
      - easy to understand
      - evidence-based
      - consistent.
    - Consumers are looking for expert health and medical advice on how to respond to COVID-19, and how to limit transmission at an individual and community level.
    - Consumers want honest, transparent and coordinated advice about the government's plans and future expectations for COVID-19.

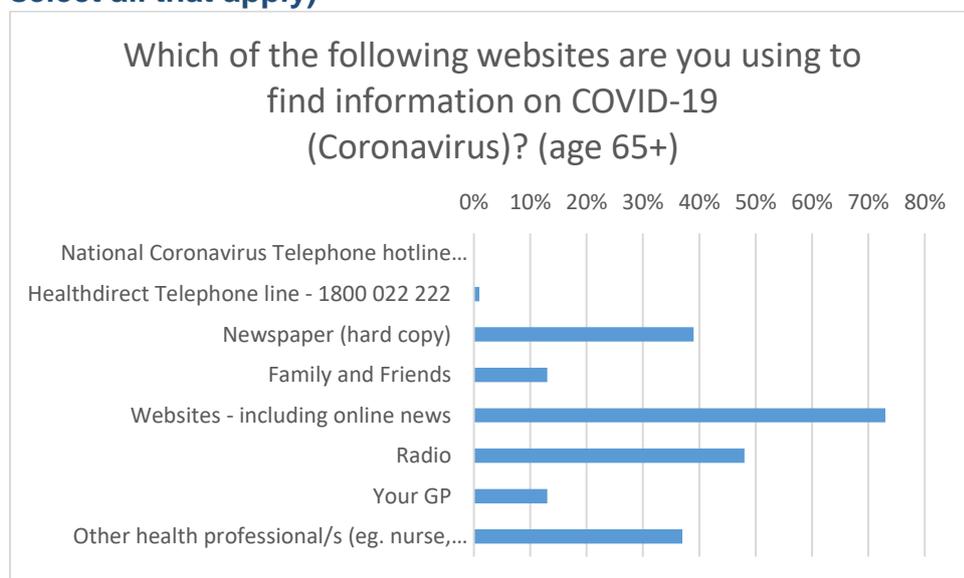
## Survey Data Summary

- HCCA Survey 1 – *Consumer experience of looking for information about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)* ran from Friday 20 March to Monday 23 March (approx. 60hrs)
- The total number of respondents was 243 people. Most were from the ACT (89%) with 11% of respondents from surrounding areas in NSW.
- **This report looks at the subset of data from the total number of respondents of those 65+ years (a total of 75 respondents). The rest of the report will refer to this group as the cohort.**

## Survey Questions

### Question 1

**Where are you getting your COVID-19 (Coronavirus) information from? (please select all that apply)**



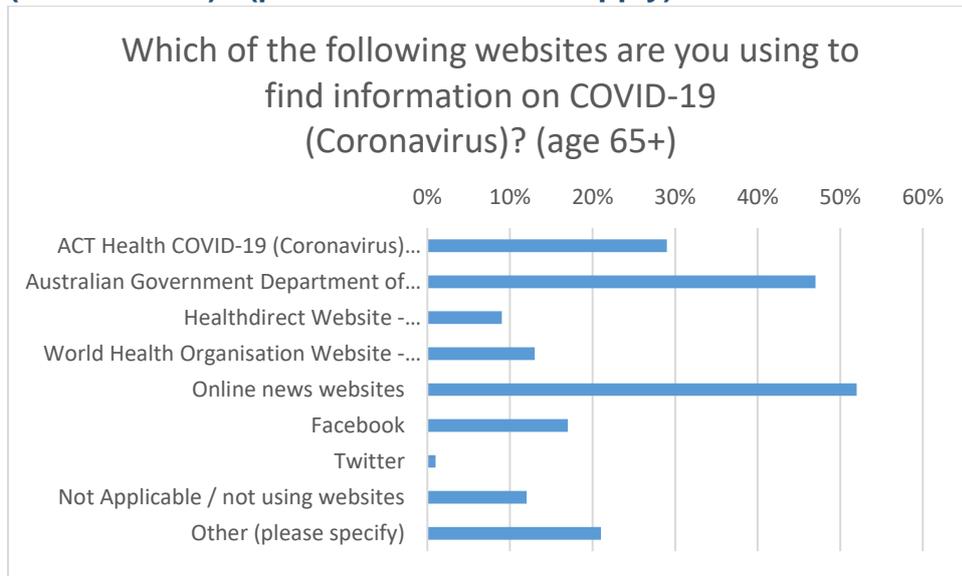
### Analysis - Question 1

- Most respondents in this cohort (73% or 55 respondents, compared with 82% of respondents in the total survey figures) indicated they are using websites to find information about COVID-19.
- A slightly higher number of respondents in this cohort (48% or 36 respondents, compared with 42% of respondents in the total survey figures) are using the radio as one of their sources of information
- A much higher number of this cohort (39% or 29 respondents, compared with 19% in the total survey figures) are using hard-copy newspapers to find information on COVID-19.
- Data indicated that those in this cohort (13% or 10 respondents, compared with 24% in the overall survey figures).

- In other sources/other health professionals, 15% of respondents in the 65+yrs age group told us they used TV, particularly the ABC, compared with 11% in the total survey figures.

## Question 2

**Which of the following websites are you using to find information on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)? (please select all that apply)**

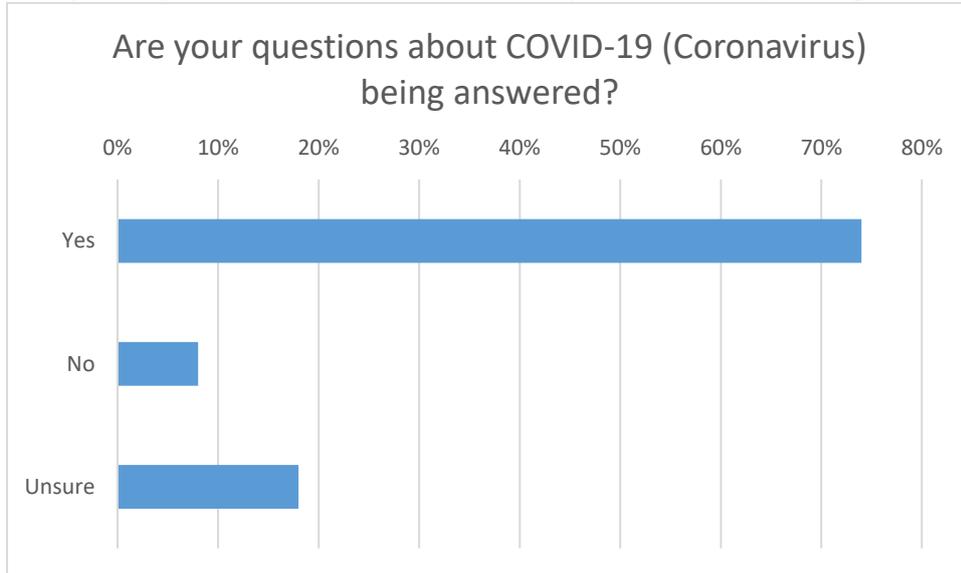


### Analysis - question 2

- The most popular websites that this cohort are looking to for information on COVID-19 include
  - Online news websites (52% or 39 respondents, compared with 60% from total survey figures)
  - Australian Government Department of Health COVID-19 website (47% or 35 respondents, compared with 51% from total survey figures)
  - ACT Health COVID-19 website (29% or 22 respondents, compared with 44% from total survey figures)
- This cohort are less likely to use Facebook (17% or 13 respondents, compared with 33% of total survey figures) or Twitter (1% or 13 respondents, compared with 10% of total survey figures).

### Question 3

#### Are your questions about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) being answered?



#### Analysis – question 3

A total of 74% of respondents in this cohort (compared with 68% of total survey respondents) thought their questions about COVID-19 were being answered.

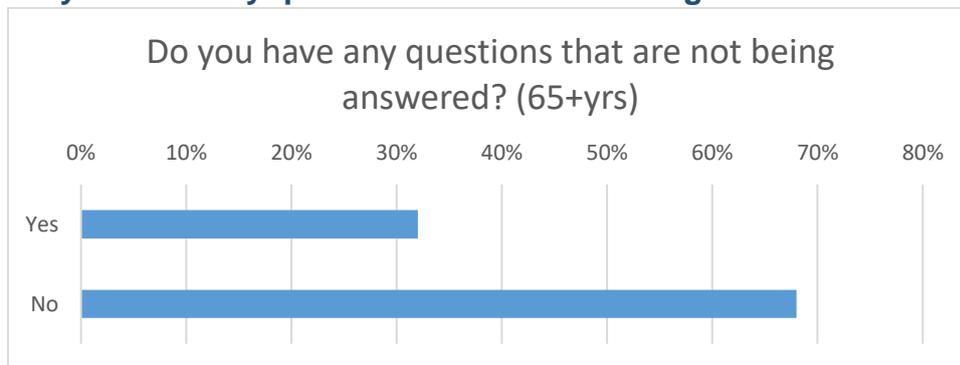
### Question 4

#### Do you feel informed or confused by the information you are reading about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?

This question presented a scale for response, where the scale ranged from 'Confused' (0) to 'Informed' (100), with 'Neither Confused or Informed' (50). The average answer on the scale across this cohort was **73%** (compared with 67% of total survey respondents). We suggest this demonstrates consumers in this cohort are feeling fairly informed but there is room for improvement.

## Question 5

### Do you have any questions that are not being answered?



A total of 68% of this cohort (compared with 58% of total survey respondents) indicated they didn't have any questions that weren't being answered.

From the remaining **32%**, who indicated they **did have questions that weren't being answered** (recognising that information is changing rapidly and some of these questions can be answered through FAQs and information on trusted websites), some of the themes and questions included:

- **Risks and data**
  - How long the virus lives on various surfaces?
  - Rates of infection in various groups including by age?
  - Who is at increased risk?
  - Can you catch COVID-19 more than once?
  - Will good personal fitness help protect me from COVID-19?
- **What to do and when**
  - Should I use a mask?
  - What should I do if I'm worried my symptoms are COVID-19?
  - Am I immune compromised and what should I do next?
- **Food safety**
  - How can I access safe food, and prepare it safely (concern about the virus living on food products from the supermarket)?
- **Children and Schools**
  - Transmission by children – what is known?
  - Can I be infected with COVID-19 by my grandchildren?
- **Domestic travel**
  - Can I travel interstate?
  - Will I be able to have my planned surgery interstate?

#### Other more specific questions:

- Why can't we have more consistent/less conflicting information on COVID-19?
- What will happen to people with disabilities using NDIS and support workers – will support still be available?

## Question 6

### **Do you have any other comments about communication around COVID-19 (Coronavirus) or how it could be improved?**

In total there were 38 responses to this question (from 75 total responses in this cohort). Some of the main themes included:

- Need communication that is honest, transparent, coordinated and consistent – consumers want to know about the plans and future expectations.
- Some consumers felt overwhelmed by the amount of information
- Consumers want more health/medical advice not just government advice
- Advice on what is ok to do –Can I have a massage, go to the hairdresser or dentist, for example? Can I have my family visit with me, what do I need to do to protect myself and them too?
- ACT Health website needs to provide timely updates
- Can the government provide a hard-copy mail out to people with information about COVID-19 (fact sheets etc.), as not everyone has online access

#### Specific comments

- Unclear about definition of 'close contact' and instructions for self-isolation
- People I see in the community are not taking social distancing seriously
- We need to add subtitles for telecasts – not everyone can read sign language
- Information should also meet the needs of non-English speakers.