



HCCA - Consumer experiences of
looking for information about COVID-19
(Women)

Report from HCCA Survey 1 – COVID-19

Subset – Women

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 women**, 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.

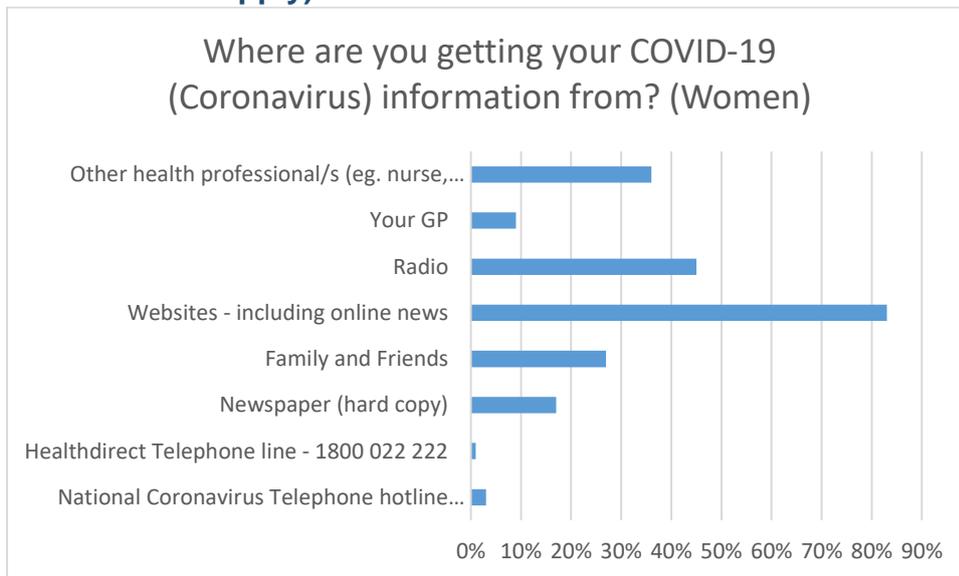
Survey Data Summary

- 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 who identified as women (a total of 160 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)



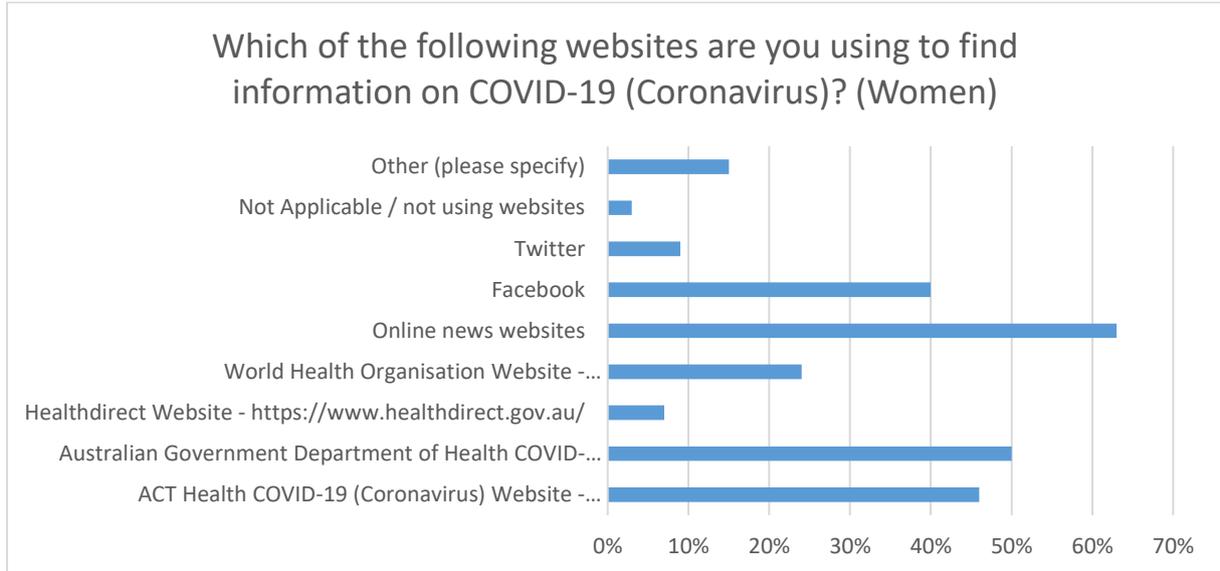
Analysis - Question 1

- Most respondents in the cohort (83% or 133 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 the cohort (45% or 71 respondents, compared with 42% of respondents in the total survey figures) are using the radio as one of their sources of information.
- A slightly lower number of the cohort (17% or 27 respondents, compared with 19% in the total survey figures) are using hard-copy newspapers to find information on COVID-19.
- Data indicated that this cohort were more likely to be using family and friends as an information source (27% or 43 respondents, compared with 24% in the overall survey figures).

- In other sources/other health professionals, only 9% of this cohort 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)

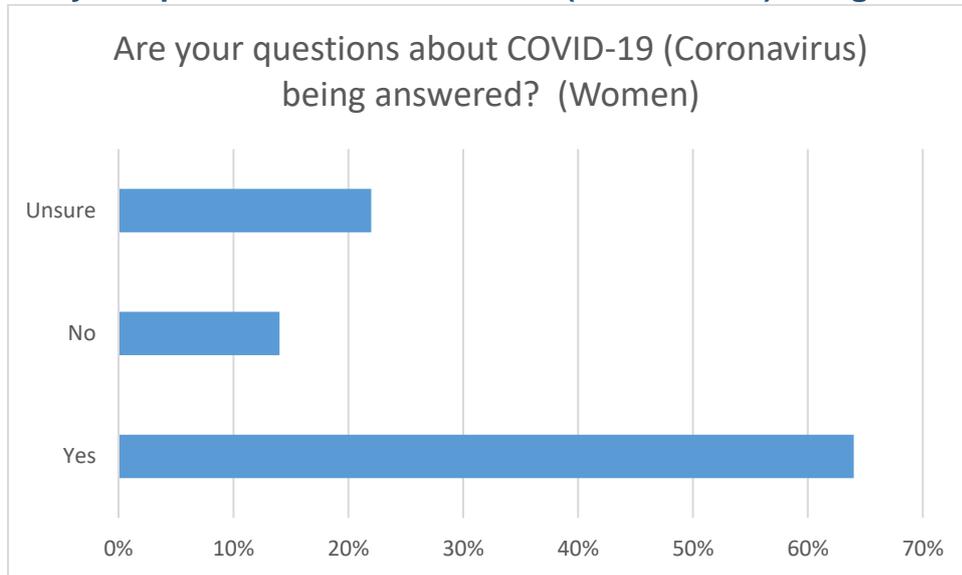


Analysis - question 2

- The most popular websites this cohort are looking to for information on COVID-19 include
 - Online news websites (63% or 99 respondents, compared with 60% from total survey figures)
 - Australian Government Department of Health COVID-19 website (50% or 79 respondents, compared with 51% from total survey figures)
 - ACT Health COVID-19 website (46% or 73 respondents, compared with 44% from total survey figures)
- Respondents from this cohort were more likely to use Facebook (40% or 63 respondents, compared with 33% of total survey figures). Twitter users in this cohort were also similar to total figures (9% or 14 respondents, compared with 10% of total survey figures).
- There were 23 respondents in this cohort (15%) who identified other sources, these included
 - covid19data.com.au
 - disease specific or health organisation websites
 - Reddit
 - ABC websites

Question 3

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



Analysis – question 3

A total of 64% of this cohort (compared with 68% of total survey respondents) thought their questions about COVID-19 were being answered.

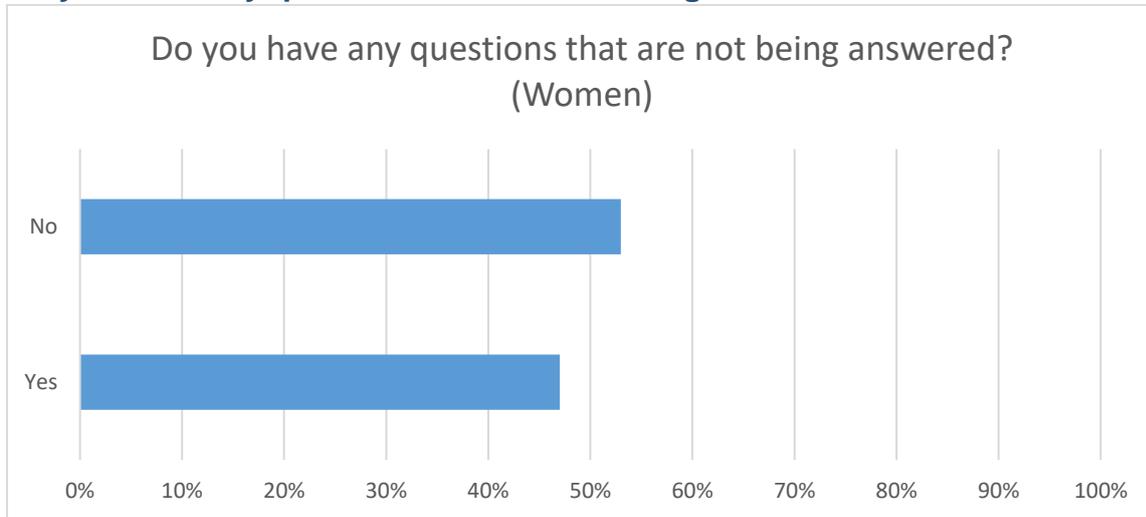
Question 4

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 **66%** (compared with 67% of total survey respondents – very similar). This suggests those 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?



Analysis – question 5

A total of 53% 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 **47%**, respondents in this cohort 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 info on trusted websites), some of the themes and questions included:

- **Risks and data**
 - How long the virus lives on various surfaces?
 - 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, but I don't meet the testing criteria?
 - Am I immunocompromised 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)
- **Pregnancy, Children and Schools**
 - Transmission by children – what is known?
 - What should I be doing about COVID-19 while pregnant?
 - When I give birth, can my toddler visit the hospital?
 - Can I be infected with COVID-19 by my grandchildren?
 - Will schools close and when?
 - Are playgrounds safe – could COVID-19 live on surfaces?

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?
- How can I access materials for making hand sanitiser or alcohol wipes to protect my family?
- Can I still play golf and cycle?
- Will I still be able to access support workers through NDIS?
- What are essential businesses?

Question 6

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

In total there were 84 responses to this question (from 160 total responses from 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 the information was too much and too variable
- 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? Can I have social contact with friends if I meet them outside and socially distanced?
- ACT Health website needs to provide more 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

- Want to see more messaging about the evidence that people can be transmitting COVID-19 while being asymptomatic.
- People I see in the community are not taking social distancing seriously
- Test shortages mean we aren't seeing the real numbers
- Concern health system won't cope
- Telecasts need subtitles for those who can't read sign language
- Type 1 Diabetes community concerned about access to food and medicines
- More info about return to health for individuals who contract COVID-19
- Unclear about definition of 'close contact' and instructions for self-isolation
- Information should also meet the needs of non-English speakers.