

Wednesday 22 December 2021

Do Queenslanders feel COVID-ready? Three consumer COVID preparedness webcasts 847 registrations and 490 attendees

With our state border due to open on 17 December, Health Consumers Queensland hosted 3 webcasts. Our aim was to increase the COVID-readiness of Queensland health consumers and carers. We did this by providing a forum for information-sharing by clinical experts and leaders from Queensland Health.

What we heard from Queenslanders:

Uncertainty – people from across Queensland including Tambo, Cooktown, Thursday Island, Quilpie and even Norfolk Island are worried about what will happen to them and their community if COVID-19 comes. Importantly, many people are already aware of how stretched the health system is, the strain on staff and the shortage of workforce, and are concerned what this will mean for them and their health.

Localised – people are wary of accepting broad statements about how COVID-19 will be managed in Queensland, when they know their local community so well and can't see how it will work in their local context. People want to hear from their local health service/hospital about what plans are in place to safely provide care for people with COVID-1 and continue with normal health care as close to home as possible and transfer to larger facilities when required. They also want to know they will be able to access food, medications and community services.

Visibility – people want these plans (both state and localised) to be visible, and to know the rationale and evidence behind the decision-making.

How to be prepared – people want to know how they themselves can be personally prepared and what their care may look like (for their on-going care and also if they were to get COVID). There has been an increase in people's health and science literacy since the beginning of the pandemic, and yet people have not been told what actions they and their household can do now to minimise or get ready for COVID. This has resulted in a polarising of the community, with some isolating now and feeling scared; and others behaving in ways that suggests they don't understand some of the consequences of what they are doing and how this might impact their own and other people's health.

Ability to escalate – people want to know how gaps/issues will be escalated, who to contact and when, to feel assured that "we've got this."

Links to webcasts

[Episode 1: COVID-19 is coming to Queensland – are you ready](#) with Dr Alex Markwell, Senior Staff Specialist at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Emergency and Trauma Centre (1/12/21) Community cases: 2

Border opened (10/12/21) Community cases: 1

[Episode 2: Challenges and lessons of COVID-19 from a unique perspective \(lived experience\)](#) with Dr Krispin Hajkowicz, one of Australia's leading infectious diseases experts and his 13 year old son, Tommy (13/12/21) Community cases: 10

[Episode 3: Preparing rural and remote communities](#) with Statewide Rural and Remote Clinical Network Co-Chairs, Dr Konrad Kangru and Dr Emily Moody (21/12/2021) Community cases: 186

Filling an information gap also helped those in the health system

In stark contrast to our previous fifty online consumer conversation, the majority of attendees of these 3 webcasts were staff who work in Queensland's health system.

Webcast attendees for "Preparing rural and remote communities":

Staff from a cross-section of the health system including: Queensland Health and Primary Health Networks, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations, community care organisations, Retrieval Services Queensland, and private primary care practices and professional organisations.

Contact:

Melissa Fox
Chief Executive Officer
melissa.fox@hcq.org.au
0404 882 716

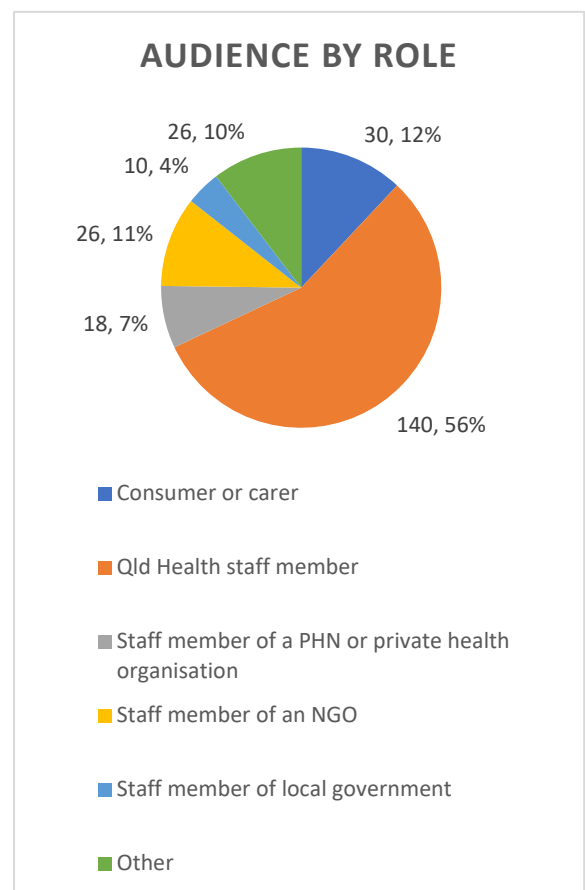


Figure 1 Audience by Role, Rural and remote webcast