

COVID-19 is rapidly changing: Examining public perceptions and behaviors in response to this evolving pandemic

In the course of four months, since the first reports about a novel strain of coronavirus, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) emerging in December 2019, countries around the world have introduced a range of community mitigation strategies with the aim to lower the trajectory of this pandemic by reducing transmission, and avoid overwhelming health services.

Community mitigation strategies refer to measures that people, and communities can take to slow the spread of infection during a period when vaccines and/or medical treatments that are not available. They include the use of personal protective measures for everyday use; community measures aimed at increasing social distancing and environmental measures.

To engage in these behaviors, people will weigh up the perceived costs and benefits related to themselves and others. It is therefore important to understand community perceptions and behaviors in order to develop effective messages. Accordingly, we carried out a cross sectional online survey of a large, demographically representative sample of the population of Australia in March 2020. This presentation will reflect on the findings of the study conducted and the findings from other international social science studies conducted during this current pandemic.

Venue: Seminar is available by [Teams Meeting Link](#)

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Recorded Seminars are available on the [SPHCM website](#)

Organisation: Seminars organised by Professor Robyn Richmond. Higher Degree student seminars organised by Poshan Thapa School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, UNSW Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia

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The School of Public Health
and Community Medicine

Seminar Invitation

Wednesday 17th June

12:00 - 1:00 pm

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About Dr Holly Seale

Dr Holly Seale is a social scientist and mid-career researcher. She is a Senior Lecturer and Director of the Bachelor of International Public Health at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW Sydney. She has over 12 years of experience in conducting infectious disease, public health and health service research focusing on questions relevant to public policy.

Her research has focused on the attitudes and behaviours of health consumers and health providers and how they impact on engagement with public health and health service strategies. She uses her behavioural insight data to formulate approaches and interventions to improve uptake of immunisations and other strategies.

Since 2008, Holly has been leading a program of research focused on pandemic preparedness. The studies she conducted during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic are amongst the most highly cited social research studies and contributed to government thinking about community participation. Her work in this area has recently led to invitations to: (1) be on World Health Organization (WHO) COVID-19 Think Tank focused on the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions for the community; (2) contribute to a social/behavioral science framework to support countries to transition during the COVID-19 pandemic, led by WHO Europe office and (3) be on a working party focused on community engagement, under the direction of WHO WPRO.