

Inquiry into the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic

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YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Despite research showing that ethnic communities would be at heightened risk of missing information and catching COVID, the government has refused to include ethnic data, especially language spoken at home other than English, in the testing regime. Even in the tracking data it is only collected if an interpreter is thought to be required. yet having the LOTE data associated with locality, gender and age, would have allowed a rapid identification of communities that were missing out on the information they need and were not being reached by testing teams. It would also have allowed information in dialect and languages that people spoke but did not read, to be communicated more efficiently,. These propositions were before the Victorian and Federal governments in June, but rejected. In the attached article published in June following research in April and May, the author demonstrates which groups would be most at risk by ethnic group and industry. He unfortunately was proven correct. Had the collection criteria been extended at that time to include LOTE spoken at home, it is likely hundreds of cases of infection could possibly have been prevented. This refusal by an Health sector leadership to be concerned enough about cultural minorities to include one question in the testing regime, has become one of the hidden scandals of the COVID pandemic times.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

Immediately include LOTE spoken at home in the record of tests, and use this data to model communication efficacy by language communities and locality using the 2016 census data.

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Signature:

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