



**Centre for Migrant
and Refugee Health**
We embrace your health

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Centre for Migrant and Refugee Health Multicultural Community Seminar 2021

The COVID-19 Vaccine: Engagement in Public Discussions and Conversations with the Multicultural Communities in Victoria, Australia

Abstract

The New Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) has inflicted more significant harm than good worldwide, leaving people with horror, fear, anxiety, panics, and confusions that continue to affect and interfere with our daily activities socially and economically. The central issues in the COVID-19 pandemic era include risk communication and how COVID-19 spreads across the population. The multicultural communities, including ethnic minorities, migrant and refugee, face extreme challenges with uncertainties of the pandemic coupling with poor health, low health literacy (language barrier), inequity, and inequality in healthcare services.

While the spread of COVID-19 remains an issue in question and concern, the discovery of COVID-19 vaccine provides the premise of exiting from the virulent disease contagion. Yet there many uncertainties that lie ahead about the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines. Questions around decisions on which vaccines should go to whom, when and how often remain at stake. The issues leave many unknowns over vaccines' effectiveness, such as the Pfizer/BioNTech and other Vaccines. And how vaccines will work in people who are at the most significant risk of severe illness in particular people who were underrepresented or excluded in the trials for efficiency and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines. Besides, there are also ambiguities and reservations on whether vaccines will prevent transmission or severe disease how long immunity will last- and which groups might resist or reject immunization because of ideology, mistrust, or misinformation.

This seminar aims to engage the public in the discussions and the conversation with the Victorian Government authorities to take their input seriously and build trust through transparency. The government should consider and incorporate the societal realities into government plans. The shocking inequality and inequity exposed by the pandemic and past injustices mean that many multicultural communities, other ethnic minorities, socially isolated, vulnerable, and disadvantaged communities will not fully trust the government.

It is time to discuss the uncertainties of COVID-19 than to rush it to vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.



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Questions:

Apart from the impact of COVID-19, risk communications and risk perceptions trigger horror, fear, and anxiety to influence disadvantaged and vulnerable communities to participate in COVID-19 Vaccination...

- I. How would the Victorian Government influence the vulnerable and socially isolated population to undertake the COVID-19 Vaccine?
- II. How prepared is the Victorian Government to address the COVID-19 Vaccine perceived adverse reactions, if any during and in the post-COVID-19 pandemic vaccination?
- III. What is mental health-specific services available during and after COVID-19 vaccination for the groups mentioned above?
- IV. How will the mental healthcare-specific services partner with the community-based organisations to address the subsequent impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable population mental health?
- V. What is the future of these groups in the Victorian Workforce during and after COVID-19 vaccination?
- VI. Does the Victorian Government look at the Community based agencies being helpful partners to their strategic plans during and post COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 VACCINE Multicultural Community Seminar 2021

Time: Tuesday, Feb 16th, 2021, 6pm-7pm

Location: Online zoom live

Facilitator: Ms. Flora Chol and Ms. Ajak Naam

Time	Topic	Person
6:00pm-6:05pm	Acknowledgement of country, welcoming and background about the program	Ms. Chalhok Naam
6:05pm-6:10pm	Introduction: Guest Speaker	Ms. Flora Chol



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