

SUMMARY 'HOW ARE YOU FEELING AUCKLAND?' MARCH 2021

OVERVIEW

In March, DPMC commissioned Moana Research to look into the sentiment in Auckland, especially South Auckland given the Alert Level changes over February and through into March.

The research was a mix of quantitative on-line survey, phone interviews and Zoom discussions

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a range of recommendations and suggestions that were identified in the report which are outlined below:

- Devolve more responsibility and resources to Māori, Pacific, South Asian and local providers, to support tailored, responsive messaging and support for communities and families across Auckland, in particular, South Auckland. Local providers include a range of community organisations such as marae, churches and sports clubs, as well as schools and businesses that can engage in two-way communication (discussion, opportunities to ask questions and receive answers) with appropriate training and funding.
- Prioritise messaging and be clear on criteria for who is to self-isolate and how. Ensure consistency of all messages. Any amendments to criteria must be emphasised and clearly highlighted as a change, particularly for main settings such as schools, workplaces, providers, businesses and community groups.
- Explore the possibility of an alert level 2.5 option where students can continue to attend school safely, to curb any impacts on learning for those unable to access necessary resources at home.
- Acknowledge and respond to the stresses and emotional toll that any future lockdowns will have on some families and individuals, including youth and elderly. Many of these are associated with the inability to provide for their families during lockdown, isolation, limited or no access to digital devices and wi-fi and the ramifications of stress and anxiety that can lead to harm.
- Improve processes for access to subsidies and supports for families and businesses who are eligible. The new processes seem onerous and punitive and deter eligible individuals and businesses from applying. Consider a subsidy that will support families who are most at risk e.g., attending work as essential workers and provide direct financial assistance for Māori and vulnerable families.
- Removing the socioeconomic stresses some families face will also assist.
- Remind Media of their ethical obligations in seeking information and ensuring unbiased reporting. Improved management and monitoring of their social media platforms is also recommended.
- Consider the impacts on frontline staff, particularly our health workers and border workers who are working across CBAC testing stations, MIQ facilities and border control.

ACTIONS TAKEN RESULTING FROM RESEARCH

As a result of the Auckland sentiment research, DPMC has undertaken the initial actions:

- Communicate findings with COVID-19 Response Group, Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and Ministry of Justice (MOJ).
 - Meetings had with both MOJ and MSD to communicate the research and the findings.
 - DPMC have connected with the MOH behavioural insights team – provided them copies of this research and we are working closer with them on approaches for communications and campaigns going forward.
 - The key outcome from meetings with MSD was creating stronger messaging for the support available. These messages are being built into DPMC's upcoming health behaviours campaigns and business support resources.

- Use the insights to assist with a review of Alert Level change information. This resulted in:
 - Refreshed and improved information on the DPMC website about key Public Health measures and created content about important COVID-19 announcements in 35 different languages.
 - DPMC has formalised its process for engaging with ethnic communities in the case of important COVID-19-related announcements (for example, resurgence or a change in Alert Level, or a change in Quarantine-Free travel status).
 - DPMC have developed, and continue to update, a CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities stakeholder list to whom we send key COVID-19 related updates and notifications. This list includes 140 key community groups, sports groups, religious groups, business councils, chambers of commerce, student associations, and multicultural associations, etc.
 - We have launched a subscriber service that the public can sign up to receive alerts in their own language when any new translated material is published. Sign-ups are in their own language and content is sent in their own language. This was used for the recent alert level shift in Wellington, where non-English information was sent out to approximately 650 subscribers across 18 different languages. The number of subscribers for this continues to grow, and approximately 75% of subscribers open and read these emails.

- Work with South Auckland communities to look at resources that would be helpful in alert level change situations.
 - DPMC has had korero with the Ministry of Health and also South Auckland Schools that has informed the development of resources and also informed channel selection to be used in future alert level changes. Work is ongoing in this space.

KEY POINTS FROM RESEARCH

1. How are people in Auckland feeling about alert level changes?

Overall, there was a heightened sense of frustration and disappointment across the region during and after the move to AL3.

Those in South Auckland are more likely to feel satisfied than those in Auckland overall (21% Sth Auck v 17% Auck), and less likely to feel very dissatisfied (8% Sth Auck v 21% Auck).

- Individuals across the different age and ethnic groups were feeling generally ok with the recent lockdowns.
- People were aware of the new reality of going in and out of lockdown.
- Although people were OK, there was still a range of mixed emotions (frustration, anger, anxiety and concern).
- Most emotions reflected feelings towards the individuals who did not follow the rules.
- South Aucklanders were angry at the stigma portrayed by the media, especially when many families were protecting their households which for some were intergenerational.
- There was confusion around the terminology of 'casual contacts' and close contacts' Mixed messaging of such terms was not always accurately communicated by health professionals on Healthline as well as through the community-based assessment clinics.

2. Clarity of information about Alert Level 3 (Auckland Overall)?

Nearly half of Aucklanders reported that information at Alert Level 3 was totally clear, with an average score of 7.9, indicating 80% of people thinking the information was clear on what they needed to do in Alert Level 3.

3. Top sources to get information – (this was relatively consistent across ethnic groups and for youth social media higher than news)

1. TV News
2. Social Media
3. COVID-19 website

4. Who are you most likely to believe about COVID-19?

1. TV News
2. Unite website
3. Health professionals