

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



09 March 2023

## Introduction

The Collaboration on Social Science and Immunisation (COSSI) is a collective of researchers, healthcare professionals, people working in immunisation policy and practice, and consumer representatives who work collaboratively to improve vaccine acceptance and uptake. COSSI was established by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) and the University of Sydney in 2016.

## What does COSSI do?

The aim of COSSI is to better inform Australian immunisation policy and practice with high-quality evidence from the social sciences. The objectives of the network are to facilitate communication and collaboration among those working in the social science of immunisation; to share research and findings; and to build capacity in research, evaluation and translation.

Activities of COSSI include regular knowledge exchange meetings and seminars/webinars, as well as occasional in-person meetings and workshops. Members can also communicate with each other via the COSSI email list, which currently has 274 members.

## COSSI Governance Committee members as at December 2022

- Katie Attwell (Chair)
- Jess Kaufman (Deputy Chair)
  
- Catherine Hughes
- Catherine King
- Elizabeth Harwood
- Holly Seale
- Ikram Abdi
- Jane Frawley
- Jody Stephenson
- Josh Karras
- Julie Leask
- Kasia Bolsewicz
- Katrina Clark
- Kerrie Wiley
- Kylie Taylor
- Margie Danchin
- Maryke Steffens
- Nicole Batten
- Paige Wood-Kenney
- Patrick Cashman
- Samantha Carlson

## NCIRS Secretariat support

- Bianca Bullivant
- Corina Shiels

## Reports and online articles

- PHAA “CDPC Corner” blog. Social science must be key component of future Australian Centres for Disease Control. Kerrie Wiley, Jane Frawley, Catherine King, Nicole Batten, Katie Attwell, Maryke Steffens and Julie Leask on behalf of the Collaboration on Social Science in Immunisation. 24 August 2022. <https://intouchpublichealth.net.au/social-science-must-be-key-component-of-future-australian-centres-for-disease-control/>
- Increasing COVID-19 vaccine uptake in children aged 5–11 years: Behavioural insights from the field – a forum to share knowledge and identify solutions [Summary report]. Co-convened by COSSI and NCIRS. 3 March 2022. [https://www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/Increasing%20COVID-19%20vaccine%20uptake%20in%20children\\_open%20forum\\_summary%20report\\_21%20March%202022\\_Final.pdf](https://www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/Increasing%20COVID-19%20vaccine%20uptake%20in%20children_open%20forum_summary%20report_21%20March%202022_Final.pdf)

## Events

- COSSI Knowledge Exchange Meeting. COSSI student/early career researcher presentations, online, 26 September 2022.
- Symposium. Lessons from the field for a pandemic vaccine rollout: Implementation, communication, policy learnings. Communicable Disease and Immunisation Conference (CDIC), Public Health Association of Australia, Sydney, 22 June 2022. 260 in-person attendees.
- COSSI members meeting. Sessions focused on supporting understanding and skills around engagement with consumers and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as around public, government and lay-audience communication. Sydney, 21 June 2022. 50 people attended the half-day session.
- COSSI Knowledge Exchange Meeting. COVID-19 vaccination campaigns: What lessons can Australia learn from abroad to inform future policies? Professor Francesco Paolucci and Marcello Antonini. Online, 8 March 2022.
- National forum: Behavioural insights to increase COVID-19 vaccine uptake in children aged 5–11 years. Co-convened by COSSI and NCIRS. 3 March 2022.

## Engagement and impact

- Article. Leask J, Seale H, Williams JH, Kaufman J, Wiley K, Mahimbo A, Clark KK, Danchin MH, Attwell K. Policy considerations for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination from the Collaboration on Social Science in Immunisation. *Medical Journal of Australia*. 13 September 2021. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.5694/mja2.51269>
- Paper and criteria provided to senior Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union lawyer via email, 19 November 2021. Union subsequently reported winning court case against BHP’s vaccine mandate at the Mt Arthur mine on the basis that the requirement was unreasonable, given BHP had not consulted its workers properly in advance of its implementation. This COSSI paper included consulting those affected as a criterion.
- Used in talking points by Mike Ryan, World Health Organization, 17 November 2021 in response to a question about vaccine mandates. See video (18 m, 45 s): <https://www.facebook.com/WHO/videos/3041547329420786>
- Cited and used for guidance in Review of COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Orders in Victoria by the Independent Pandemic Management Advisory Committee, September 2022.

<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/review-COVID-19-mandatory-vaccination-orders-victoria-independent-pandemic-management-committee.pdf>

## Prizes awarded to COSSI

- Finalist, Research Australia Awards, November 2022. (Nominated by Professor Andrew Steer, Murdoch Children's Research Institute & Professor Don Nutbeam, Sydney Health Partners).
- President's Award, Public Health Association of Australia, 21 June 2022.

## Selected policy engagement

- Chair, Julie Leask and Kerrie Wiley met with representatives from Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet regarding in-house consulting and Charter for Partnerships and Engagement. 16 December 2022.
- Chair participated in online consultation on behalf of COSSI regarding establishment of Australia's Centre for Disease Control (CDC). 24 November 2022.
- Chair met with advisor to Minister Katy Gallagher at Parliament. 23 November 2022.
- COSSI letter to Minister Gallagher regarding use of COSSI expertise for in-house consultancy for Australian Public Service. Sent 25 October 2022.

## Online engagement

- Twitter: @COSSI\_Vaccine
  - 838 followers – increase of 124 in the reported period
- COSSI website
  - 1,279 page views (Jan–Oct 2022)
  - Average time on webpage: 1 m, 8 s
- COSSI Early Researchers Network (started December 2022)
  - 21 students and early career researchers joined
  - Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cossisercn>

## How to join COSSI

Anyone with an interest in social science and immunisation can join COSSI. Many of our members are health professionals who deliver and communicate about immunisation regularly. Some members work in public health policy or government. Others are academic researchers, lecturers or students interested in different aspects of social science and immunisation. Some members represent consumers.

**Join COSSI here:** <https://www.ncirs.org.au/cossi/join-cossi>

**Contact COSSI here:** [cossi.aus@gmail.com](mailto:cossi.aus@gmail.com)