

Study examines attitudes to vaccine mandates

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A new study from The University of Western Australia published in *Vaccine* examines how people feel about policies and practices surrounding vaccine mandates.

Lead researcher and co-lead author Associate Professor Katie Attwell, from UWA's School of Social Sciences, said the study aimed to understand how West Australians would think and feel about the prospect of different kinds of mandates for COVID-19 vaccinations before any of them had been implemented.

"We were eager to understand whether people thought differently about mandates introduced by the government or by the [private sector](#). Those who supported them were generally supportive of either kind," Associate Professor Attwell said.

"The publication of this work is timely with Western Australia implementing workforce [vaccine](#) mandates for a range of sectors."

Co-lead author Dr Marco Rizzi, from UWA's Law School, said the results found a mixture of emphatic support for mandates, support under some conditions and people who were opposed to them.

"Opponents were not against vaccination but were concerned that mandates might generate opposition or punish those who are economically vulnerable," Dr Rizzi said.

Associate Professor Attwell said the generally high level of support for mandates in the study echoed some work she conducted earlier in the pandemic with a different team, which found more Australians were supportive of mandates at that time than intended to be vaccinated themselves.

"As a country and as a state, we are now used to being heavily governed in order to limit the spread of disease," she said.

"No Jab, No Pay and No Jab, No Play policies for childhood vaccination have been popularly supported prior to COVID. I was not surprised by

our results that people would envisage these kinds of policies operating for adults with regard to COVID-19."

The Coronavax study was led by a research team from VaxPolLab at UWA and the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases at Telethon Kids Institute. The team is now conducting a new analysis of attitudes towards mandates since June 2021, when the current paper was submitted.

"The data for our new paper will show people responding to mandates as they are actually announced, and we'll be hearing from people who are actually affected by them," Associate Professor Attwell said.

More information: Katie Attwell et al, COVID-19 vaccine Mandates: An Australian attitudinal study, *Vaccine* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2021.11.056](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2021.11.056)

Provided by University of Western Australia

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