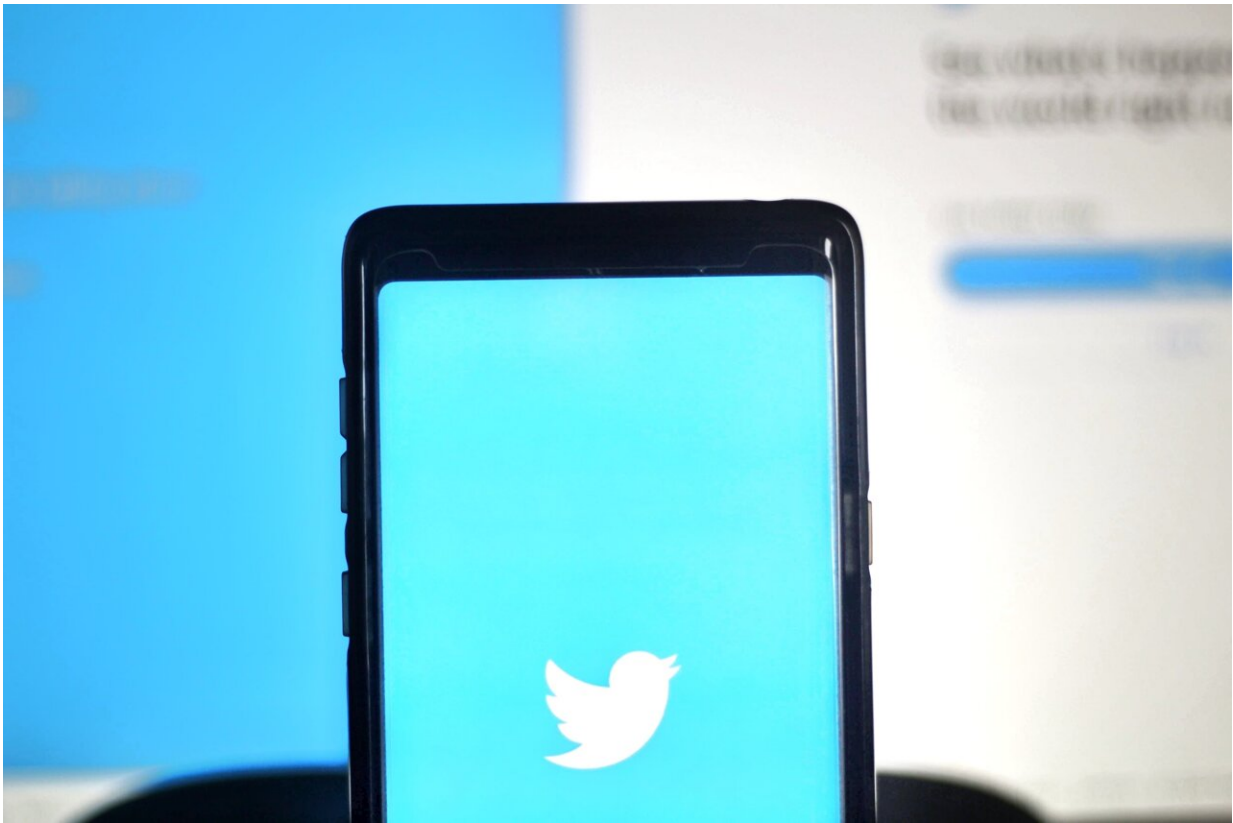


# Social media analysis reveals health system stress

February 2 2022

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Analysis of social media posts in January 2022 has revealed new insights into stresses on the health system and health workers, the need for fairness and clarity around rules and regulations, and the impact of

uncertainty around the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia.

The TIGER C19 project—Timely Integration of user-Generated Responses to C19—run collaboratively between Burnet Institute and the University of Melbourne—has combined big data analytics of selected keywords and themes from Reddit and Twitter ever since the onset of COVID-19.

TIGER C19 Co-Lead Investigator, Professor Robert Power AM, and his team, collated and analyzed nearly 30,000 Twitter and Reddit posts from 6 and 7 January which contained six separate keywords relating to current COVID-19-related issues.

"There's always been concern around the impact on the [health](#) system, but omicron has put [health system](#) workers under enormous pressure," Professor Power said.

"This is coming through very clearly in the [social media](#) posts with numerous accounts of burnout, of stress, of workers forced to isolate or being COVID-positive themselves."

Professor Power said the Novak Djokovic case evoked a strong response on social media around fairness, clarity and adherence to rules.

"The Djokovic case illustrated that if people don't see that rules are being upheld or being fair across all sectors of society, people are going to begin to doubt their own adherence to the rules," he said.

"There was a call for clarity around COVID rules, how they're adhered to and how they're applied, and the need for clear messaging from both the public health sector and from politicians.

Professor Power said that latest data also provided important insights

into the 'shadow lockdown' and barriers to forward planning.

"There is this general sense of wariness, as well as weariness, resulting from the Omicron outbreak. People have become introspective and very circumspect regarding traveling and how they spend time outside of the home.

"Our previous TIGER C19 surveys highlighted a real hope from media posts that we could open up again. Now many people are holding back and it's having a real impact on small businesses, as reports from the current crop of posts and reposts illustrate.

"Social media posts expressed worry that this is not going to be over quickly, and that makes it difficult for people to plan ahead.

"And with uncertainty about the future, there's an increasing number of narratives around the psychological impact of the pandemic on individuals—that's something that came through strongly this time."

Professor Power emphasized that TIGER C19 analysis is a powerful tool to explore social media trends in real-time, with potential and value to inform policy and public health messaging.

"TIGER C19 is a vibrant tool that turns an average of 80,000 posts/reposts into a focused two to three-page report in a matter of days," he said.

"By repeating these exercises in real-time, and by expanding the search terms, we've been able to closely monitor responses and attitudes to COVID-19 in Victoria and Australia.

"In this way and freed from the constraints of more traditional social research methods, TIGER C19 offers a novel and innovative means to

observe and measure responses to COVID, and indeed, other relevant public health issues."

As Professor Power put it: "TIGER C19 has its paw on the pulse of community sensibilities, concerns and aspirations."

**More information:** The report is available online:  
[burnet.edu.au/system/asset/fil ... 19 2022 Report 1.pdf](https://burnet.edu.au/system/asset/file/19_2022_Report_1.pdf)

Provided by Burnet Institute

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