

# AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CALMER, MORE COOPERATIVE WITH THE RESTRICTIONS AND MORE ACCEPTING SINCE THE SECOND WAVE

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## THE MEASURES WORK

There was a major outbreak in Melbourne in July and August 2020 due to mistakes in hotel quarantine and many residents of nursing homes died when the virus was brought to the facilities by staff. There was a strict lockdown in Victoria for 112 days with people having to stay at home and only go shopping within 5 kms for essential items. No hairdressers, gyms, beauty salons or cinemas. But the measures work: the lockdown took the numbers from 700 per day to no new cases. We had a similar lockdown on the Northern Beaches area of Sydney in December and January where there were 180 cases. There have been none now for three weeks.

## LIMITED TRAVELLING

The rest of Australia has been very careful and borders have been closed between states. This can happen with only a few hours' notice meaning people get caught in other states and can't get home! I miss being able to easily visit my mother in her nursing home as there are strict time limits. However, I can still get there at least once a week. I do miss visiting with my son and grandchildren in Canberra, as people from Sydney were not allowed into Canberra and there were police roadblocks to check! That has now been eased. As for

overseas travel, this will clearly not happen for a long time! We miss our visits to the Netherlands and hope that we can visit again in 2022. My husband and I did our Masters lectures for the Leiden University Medical Center by Skype in 2020.

## **SIMPLE MEASURES**

Personally it has only had an effect on me when I leave the home. We have been able to go out to work, go shopping and still drive to other parts of our states. We have been wearing masks on public transport and in supermarkets. We also have been wearing them at work when in close contact with patients. Furthermore, we are all becoming very used to regular hand sanitising and social distancing.

## **TELEHEALTH**

I am most concerned about my older patients catching the virus as they are the most likely to die. I am very concerned that the virus in nursing homes, as it can spread very quickly. We have been doing a lot of work with nursing homes to train the staff in use of personal protective equipment. Nowadays we are doing a bit more health work using telehealth.

## **FIRST VERSUS SECOND WAVE**

In the first wave, everyone was quite scared and there was panic buying for particularly toilet paper! With the second wave people have been calmer but also generally more cooperative with the restrictions and more accepting. We are more of a community now; we have taken the time to meet our neighbours and are much more friendly since Covid. We are very grateful at our good fortune in Australia when we compare ourselves to other countries.