

The Essential Report

24 August 2020



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Prepared By: Essential Research

Data Supplied by:



AMSRS 

Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.



About this poll

This report summarises the results of a fortnightly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Qualtrics. The survey was conducted online from 13th to 16th August 2020 and is based on 1,068 respondents.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix at the end of the report.

Note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.

Government response to Covid-19

Q Overall, how would you rate the Government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05
Very poor	6%	7%	6%	6%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%
Quite poor	11%	8%	11%	10%	8%	8%	8%	7%	6%	7%	9%
Neither good, nor poor	22%	21%	20%	20%	17%	16%	18%	20%	16%	17%	16%
Quite good	40%	40%	40%	40%	43%	42%	40%	39%	43%	41%	39%
Very good	22%	24%	24%	24%	27%	30%	30%	28%	30%	32%	32%
TOTAL: Poor	17%	16%	16%	16%	12%	11%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%
TOTAL: Good	61%	63%	64%	64%	71%	72%	70%	68%	73%	73%	71%
Base (n)	1,068	1,010	1,058	1,054	1,079	1,087	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067

- Participants' rating of the Federal Government's handling of the crisis slips again this week, with 61% rating their response as very or quite good. This is progressively down from 72% positive rating in June.
- Men are more likely than women to rate the Government's performance as very poor or quite poor (21% to 13%).
- Rating of the Government among Labor supporters has fallen from 69% rating their handling very or quite good in May to 55% this week. Positive rating among Coalition supporters remains high at 77%



State Government response to Covid-19

Q How would you rate your state government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

TOTAL: Good	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05
NSW	59%	61%	62%	63%	70%	65%	67%	62%	65%	70%	70%
VIC	47%	49%	53%	49%	65%	75%	72%	71%	73%	71%	71%
QLD	73%	68%	67%	69%	64%	67%	68%	69%	74%	66%	70%
SA	65%	72%	76%	79%	79%	76%	79%	70%	84%	80%	78%
WA	84%	86%	82%	77%	75%	77%	84%	79%	83%	86%	83%

- Positive rating of the NSW Government's handling of the crisis moved -2%pts this week to 59%, this is down from a peak of 70% in June.
- Positive rating of the Victorian Government also moved -2%pts this week (to 47%). This is consistent with ratings since the outbreak in Victoria in July.
- Western Australia (84%) have the highest state government ratings for handling the crisis.



VICTORIA ONLY	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05
Very poor	15%	16%	13%	14%	8%	6%	6%	4%	3%	3%	4%
Quite poor	20%	14%	17%	12%	5%	5%	6%	7%	9%	10%	11%
Neither good, nor poor	17%	21%	17%	25%	22%	13%	16%	17%	16%	15%	15%
Quite good	29%	28%	34%	32%	38%	39%	38%	39%	37%	38%	34%
Very good	18%	21%	19%	17%	26%	36%	34%	33%	36%	33%	37%
TOTAL: Poor	36%	30%	30%	26%	13%	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%	14%
TOTAL: Good	47%	49%	53%	49%	65%	75%	72%	71%	73%	71%	71%
Base (n)	275	499	239	281	261	275	275	275	275	267	275



Responsibility for Covid-19 Outbreak in Aged Care

Q In your opinion, who is most responsible for the recent Covid-19 outbreaks and spread of the virus within aged care facilities?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Federal Government	28%	32%	24%	31%	32%	21%	34%	25%	28%	31%
State or Territory governments	30%	29%	31%	37%	30%	24%	26%	32%	35%	28%
Aged Care providers	42%	39%	45%	32%	37%	55%	40%	43%	37%	41%
Base (n)	1,068	513	555	317	370	381	313	447	96	118

- Similar proportions of people attribute responsibility to the spread of Covid-19 within aged care facilities to Federal (28%) and state (30%) governments. However more (42%) place the responsibility on the providers of aged care.
- Men are more likely than women to say the Federal government is responsible (32% to 24%).
- Coalition voters are least likely to believe the Federal government is responsible for the outbreaks of Covid-19 within aged care facilities (25%).



Funding for Aged Care

Q As far as you are aware, who is responsible for regulation and funding of private aged care facilities?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Federal Government	49%	53%	44%	40%	49%	56%	51%	53%	46%	47%
State or Territory governments	27%	27%	27%	34%	27%	21%	28%	26%	36%	32%
Unsure	25%	20%	29%	26%	25%	24%	22%	22%	19%	21%
Base (n)	1,068	513	555	317	370	381	313	447	96	118

- About half of people correctly know that the Federal Government is responsible for the regulation and funding of private aged care facilities.



Statements about Covid-19 Outbreak in Aged Care

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the recent Covid-19 outbreaks and spread of the virus within aged care facilities?

	TOTAL: AGREE	TOTAL: DISAGREE	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
Authorities failed to prepare an adequate Covid-19 strategy to deal with outbreaks in aged care facilities	77%	14%	38%	39%	11%	3%	9%
Hygiene and care standards in private care homes are poor which has contributed to the spread of Covid-19	71%	17%	32%	39%	13%	4%	12%
Covid-19 has entered and spread through aged care facilities because of community transmission from friends and families of residents	67%	19%	24%	42%	13%	6%	14%
The impact of Covid-19 in aged care facilities has been worsened by long-term underfunding of the aged care sector	70%	18%	34%	26%	14%	4%	12%

TOTAL: AGREE	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			TOTAL: Other
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	
Authorities failed to prepare an adequate Covid-19 strategy to deal with outbreaks in aged care facilities	77%	77%	77%	69%	78%	83%	82%	79%	79%	73%
Hygiene and care standards in private care homes are poor which has contributed to the spread of Covid-19	71%	73%	69%	62%	70%	78%	74%	74%	63%	73%
Covid-19 has entered and spread through aged care facilities because of community transmission from friends and families of residents	67%	72%	62%	69%	72%	61%	68%	73%	68%	58%
The impact of Covid-19 in aged care facilities has been worsened by long-term underfunding of the aged care sector	70%	70%	70%	69%	71%	70%	77%	68%	85%	67%
Base (n)	1,068	513	555	317	370	381	313	447	96	118

- There is acknowledgement in the community of a range of factors that have contributed to the spread of Covid-19 within aged care facilities. A majority of people believe that there was insufficient preparation from authorities (77% agreement) and that long-term underfunding of aged care facilities has worsened the impact.
- Similar numbers also agree that the hygiene and care standards in private care homes has contributed to the spread of (71%) and that community transmission from friends and families of residents has also contributed to the spread (67%).



Support for Measures to Limit Covid-19 Outbreak

Q To what extent would you support or oppose the following measures to limit the spread of Covid-19 in the community?

	TOTAL: SUPPORT	TOTAL: OPPOSE	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
All aged care facility residents who are diagnosed with Covid-19 are automatically transferred to a public hospital	63%	17%	35%	28%	20%	10%	7%
Any person diagnosed with Covid-19 is required to quarantine in a dedicated facility and not isolate from home	52%	23%	27%	24%	25%	14%	9%
The closure of international borders to all foreign travellers and returning Australian citizens	65%	18%	39%	26%	17%	10%	8%
Any person diagnosed with Covid-19 must wear a tracking bracelet while self-isolating to ensure they don't leave their homes	60%	20%	31%	29%	20%	11%	10%

TOTAL: SUPPORT	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			TOTAL: Other
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	
All aged care facility residents who are diagnosed with Covid-19 are automatically transferred to a public hospital	63%	63%	63%	49%	62%	78%	65%	67%	60%	57%
Any person diagnosed with Covid-19 is required to quarantine in a dedicated facility and not isolate from home	52%	52%	52%	44%	51%	60%	55%	53%	47%	43%
The closure of international borders to all foreign travellers and returning Australian citizens	65%	63%	68%	51%	65%	78%	68%	69%	56%	61%
Any person diagnosed with Covid-19 must wear a tracking bracelet while self-isolating to ensure they don't leave their homes	60%	60%	60%	45%	61%	71%	63%	62%	47%	59%
Base (n)	1,068	513	555	317	370	381	313	447	96	118

- Around two-thirds of people support the closure of international borders to all foreign travellers and returning Australian citizens (65%), with similar numbers also supporting the transfer to a public hospital of all aged care facility residents who are diagnosed with Covid-19 (63%) and the compulsory wearing of a tracking bracelet during self-isolation for people diagnosed with Covi-19 (60%).
- Just over half of people support the requirement for any person diagnosed with Covid-19 is required to quarantine in a dedicated facility and not isolate from home (52%). Support for this proposition is lowest among those aged 18-34 (44%) and Greens voters (47%).



Coronavirus concerns

Q To what extent are you concerned about the threat of Covid-19 (coronavirus) in Australia?

	24/08	10/08	27/07	13/07	22/06	15/06	08/06	01/06	25/05	18/05	11/05
Very concerned	40%	50%	43%	36%	25%	28%	27%	32%	30%	33%	34%
Quite concerned	46%	40%	44%	48%	50%	45%	48%	49%	49%	47%	49%
Not that concerned	10%	7%	9%	12%	21%	23%	21%	15%	16%	16%	14%
Not at all concerned	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	3%
Base (n)	1,068	1,010	1,058	1,054	1,079	1,087	1,073	1,059	1,087	1,073	1,067

- Concern about Covid-19 has eased this week with 40% very concerned about the threat (down from 50% earlier in the month).



Government funding for gas pipelines

Q To what extent do you support or oppose the use of taxpayer money to fund a gas pipelines in Australia?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Federal Voting Intention			TOTAL: Other
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	
Strongly oppose	13%	15%	11%	13%	16%	11%	17%	7%	29%	19%
Somewhat oppose	14%	14%	14%	17%	15%	10%	17%	11%	22%	11%
Neither support, nor oppose	32%	27%	37%	36%	28%	33%	34%	29%	29%	36%
Somewhat support	16%	19%	13%	10%	17%	20%	12%	24%	8%	15%
Strongly support	11%	17%	5%	10%	10%	13%	9%	16%	7%	9%
Unsure	14%	9%	19%	14%	14%	14%	10%	13%	6%	11%
TOTAL: Oppose	27%	28%	26%	29%	31%	21%	35%	18%	51%	29%
TOTAL: Support	27%	36%	18%	21%	27%	33%	21%	40%	15%	24%
Base (n)	1,068	513	555	317	370	381	313	447	96	118

- Overall, support and opposition towards government funding for gas pipelines is equal (both 27%). 32% neither support nor oppose and 14% are unsure on the issue
- Support for funding is highest among men (36%), those aged over 55 years (33%) and Coalition voters (40%).



Appendix: Household income definitions*

TOTAL: Lower Income	Up to \$51,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
TOTAL: Mid Income	\$52,000 to \$103,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
TOTAL: High Income	More than \$104,000 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)

Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Qualtrics.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers issues that are topical, and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect current media and social issues.

The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting.

The online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants. Essential Research uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

All Essential Research staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.