



## **Media release: Health Consumers Tasmania survey shows support for vaccine passport isn't clear-cut**

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With talk that governments may implement a vaccine passport system, Health Consumers Tasmania (HCT) decided to ask Tasmanians what they thought, and the results are anything but clear-cut.

HCT CEO, Bruce Levett, said 1,200 Tasmanians responded to the survey.

“The results show the community is polarised,” Mr Levett said.

“Some people are concerned about the impact a vaccine passport may have on their freedoms and their ability to fully participate in life. Others are worried about how safe it will be to mix in public spaces if some people choose not to be vaccinated.

“62.1 per cent of people surveyed supporting vaccine passports in some circumstances, with 34.9 per cent against.

“Based on this feedback, we support vaccine passports when people are required to work in essential jobs, and to enable quarantining in your family home (rather than in a hotel) when returning to the State and for visiting vulnerable people, such as in aged care facilities.

“Our survey showed quite clearly that people do not support vaccine passports for everyday activities like shopping for food, accessing health care, travelling across borders or through COVID hotspots, education and attending public events or restaurants. Community support for vaccine passports in this scenario falls to 41.1 per cent and those against a vaccine passport increases to 52.8 per cent.

“Existing measures like temperature checks, masks, distancing, sanitising, and checking in, as well as lockdowns as needed are effective in this case.

“We need to carefully balance the need to advance public health outcomes with minimising the potential for discrimination and community division. Vaccine passports need to be used humanely, in a way that minimises social and economic divisions amongst Tasmanians.

“Governments also need to explain how a passport system would accommodate people who can’t have a COVID vaccination for medical or other reasons, the vulnerable or isolated who fail to be vaccinated or those who can’t afford smart phones (to display the passport) or how it will be rolled out in a way that minimises misuse or abuse.

“We know that as many Tasmanians as possible need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to save lives and to prevent unnecessary illness. But just as we should be cautious about how we reopen our borders, we need to be cautious about how we apply a vaccine passport.”