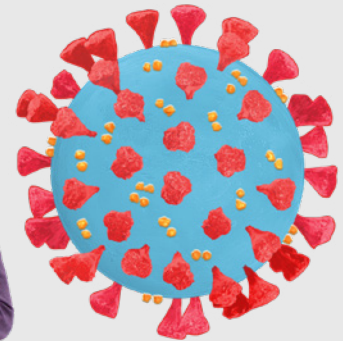




How the Australian Government did in the COVID-19 pandemic

Part 1



Easy Read

About this information



Australian Government
Department of the
Prime Minister and Cabinet

The **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet** made this information.



The **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet** supports the Prime Minister to do their work.



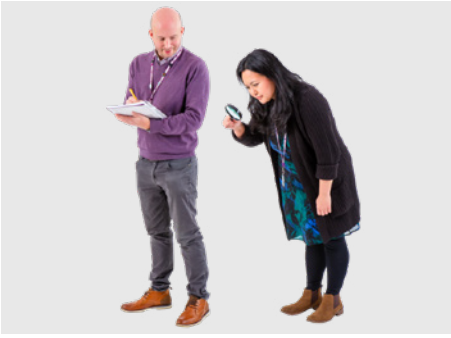
There was an **inquiry** into how the Australian Government did in the COVID-19 **pandemic**.



An **inquiry** is when the Government looks into an issue.



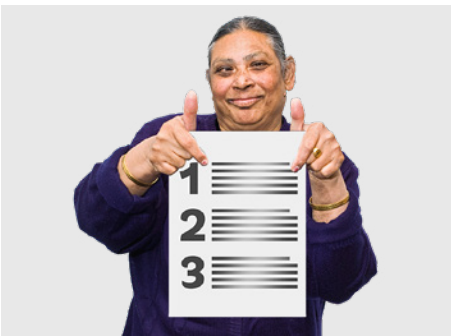
A **pandemic** is when people around the world get sick at the same time.



The Government asked some **experts** to do the inquiry.



Experts are people who know a lot about a topic.

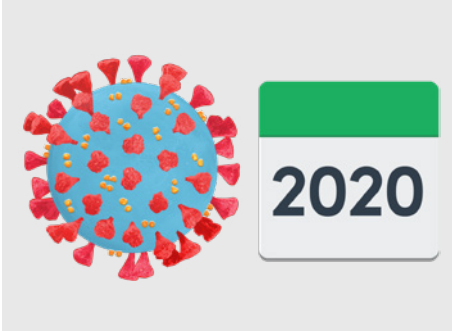


This information tells you what we found out in the inquiry.



You can ask for support to read this information.

COVID-19 in Australia



COVID-19 started in 2020.



Our Government did not have good plans for what to do.



Australia still did a good job of dealing with COVID-19.



The pandemic was hard for everyone.

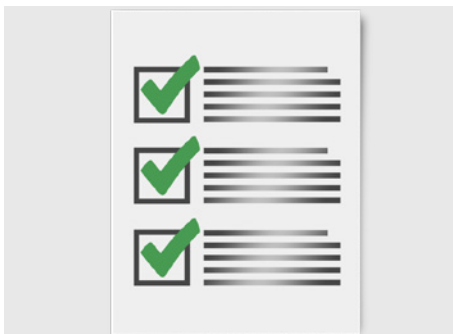
There are lots of things we learned about



- What worked well



- What the Government could do better.



Governments should use what we learned to get ready for the next pandemic.

How we did the inquiry



We spoke to lots of different people to do this inquiry.



We spoke to people who made big decisions in COVID-19 like

- The last Prime Minister Scott Morrison
- Leaders of the states and territories in COVID-19.



We heard from lots of different people in the community.



We used what everyone told us to make this information.

9 big things the Government should do



There are 9 big things that are important to be ready for a pandemic.

They are



1. Do things so more people stay safe



2. Plan and get ready



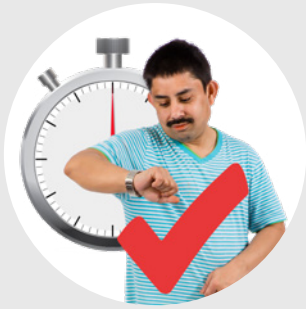
3. Have leaders that work together



4. Use **evidence** to make decisions.



Evidence is when we find proof about something.



5. Be ready to do things quickly



6. Have good relationships



7. Have trust with the community



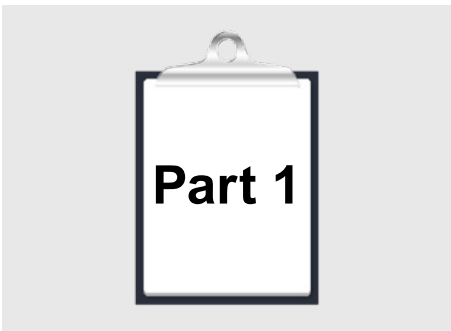
8. Be fair for all groups of people



9. Say things in a clear way.



This Easy Read information is about the big things from numbers 1 to 4.



We call this information **Part 1**.



Part 2 has Easy Read information about the big things from numbers 5 to 9.

1. Do things so more people stay safe

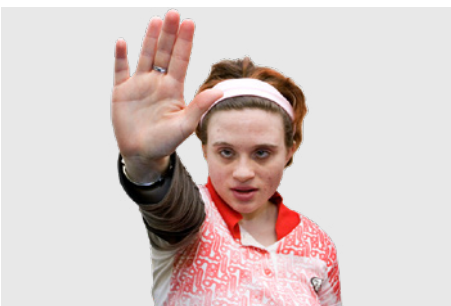


The Government should do things so more people stay safe in a pandemic.



This part will look at the things our Government did to keep people safe from COVID-19.

Stop COVID-19



When COVID-19 happened the Government made changes to stop people getting it.



There was a law that said the Government could make these decisions.



The changes were not always good for everyone.



Some people had a harder time in COVID-19 than others.

Older people in aged care



Most of the Australians who died in the first year of COVID-19 were older people in aged care.



We found that people living in aged care had a hard time because

- Aged care services were not ready for a pandemic
- Many people in aged care could not see their family and friends in COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines



Most Australians had COVID-19 **vaccines** by the end of 2021.



Vaccines are medicines that may stop you and others from getting sick.



The Government said some people had to have the COVID-19 vaccine to work.



We found out this rule made some people not want to get a vaccine.

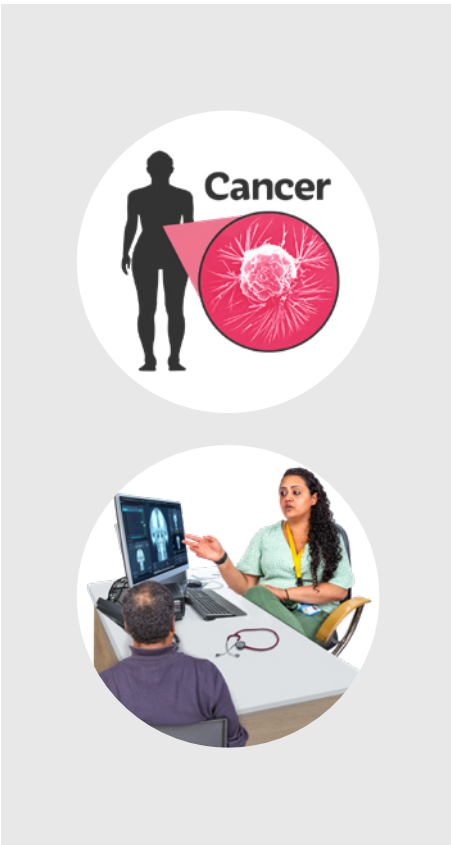


There were some people who got sick from the COVID-19 vaccine.

Other health problems



Lots of people did not get support for other health problems in the pandemic.



It was harder for people to get

- Checked for cancer

- **Elective surgery.**



Elective surgery is a surgery that you need but is not an emergency.

Other problems



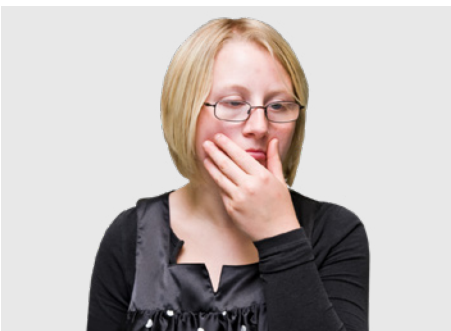
Lots of other problems happened to people in the pandemic.



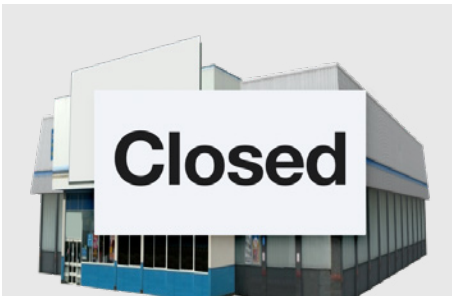
There was more **violence** happening in families.



Violence is when someone hurts you or another person.



Some women and children had violence happen to them for the first time.



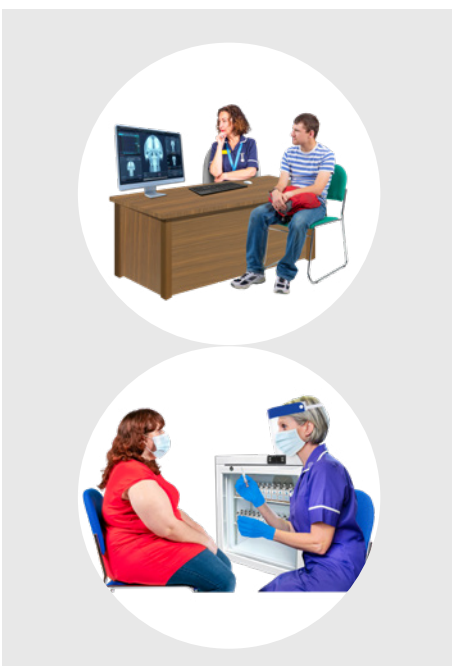
Lots of schools closed because they were worried about children and teachers getting sick.



Some children are now having problems because they did not go to school in COVID-19.



These are problems with things like their learning and mental health.



Lots of people with disability could not get support to

- Go to medical meetings
- Get COVID-19 vaccines or tests.



We do not have enough information about how COVID-19 was for people with disability.



The Government made programs to support people who did not have homes.



These programs worked very well to keep these people safe.

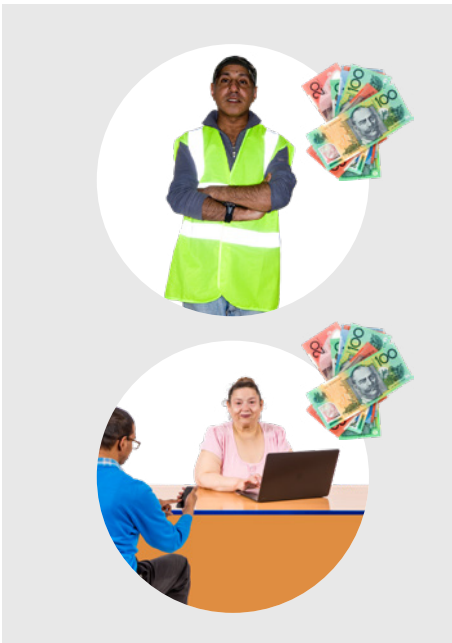
Problems for the economy



When COVID-19 happened there were lots of problems for the **economy**.

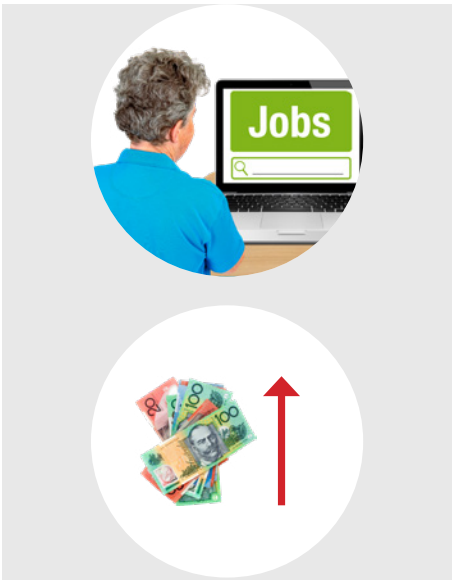


The **economy** means how Australia gets and spends money.



Some things that did go well are

- The Government gave a lot of support to people and businesses
- The Government spent money to support jobs.



Some things that did not go well are

- **JobKeeper** started too late to save some peoples jobs
- Some things we did made prices go up.



JobKeeper was money the Government gave to businesses to help people keep their jobs.

What we learned



To make sure less people get hurt in a pandemic we need to

- Think of all these issues
- Make changes that think about these issues.

2. Plan and get ready



The Government should make a plan for what to do when another pandemic happens.



The Government should do things like

- Make health services better
- Make new ways to find and keep information
- Make sure there will be enough things like vaccines and food.



Before COVID-19 the Government had some plans for what to do in a **health emergency**.



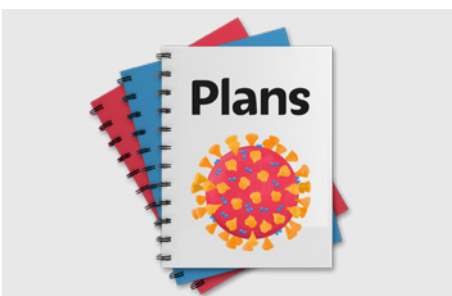
A **health emergency** is when lots of people could get hurt or sick.



There were not good plans to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.



There were no plans about how to get Australians home who were overseas.



The Government only started making some plans when COVID-19 started.



It was still hard for people to know what would happen next.

What we learned



Plans for pandemics should say how to deal with different kinds of **infectious diseases**.



Infectious diseases are when you become sick from catching a germ.



We must check our health services to make sure they have everything they need.

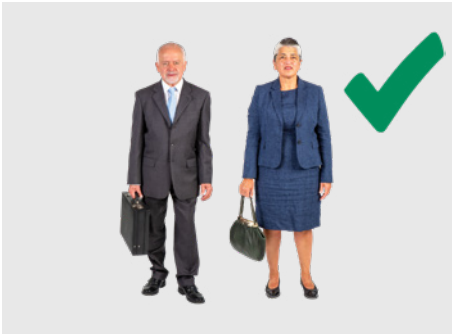


Indoor spaces can be safer if more air can be let in.



Our Governments should all agree on the plans to make sure they work.

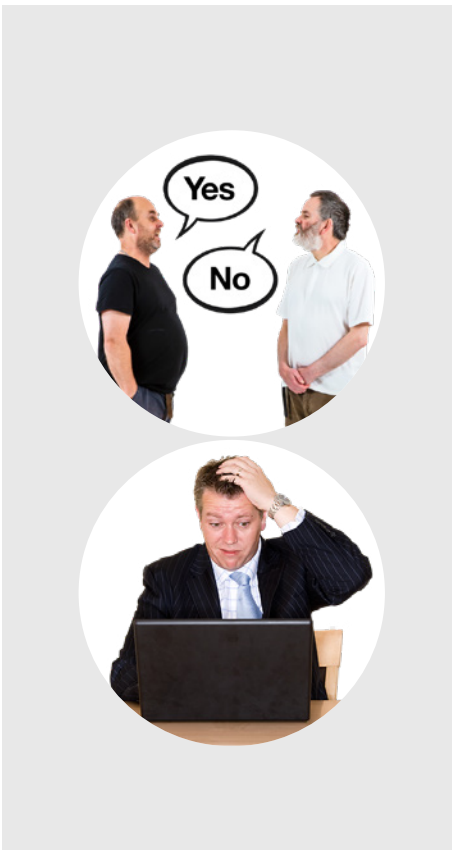
3. Have good leaders that work together



The Government needs to make hard decisions and work together in a pandemic.



The inquiry said the Prime Minister and other leaders did a good job at the start of COVID-19.



But some bad things happened when leaders

- Did not work together

- Made mistakes.



These are things like

- Lots of people died in aged care in Victoria
- It took a long time for vaccines to be ready.



Australian Government

When COVID-19 started the Government made a **National Cabinet**.



The **National Cabinet** was a group of Government leaders who made decisions about COVID-19.



At first they worked very well together.



At the end of the pandemic the National Cabinet did not work well.



This is because the leaders could not agree on decisions.



A group of people from Government met a lot in COVID-19.



They made big decisions about COVID-19.



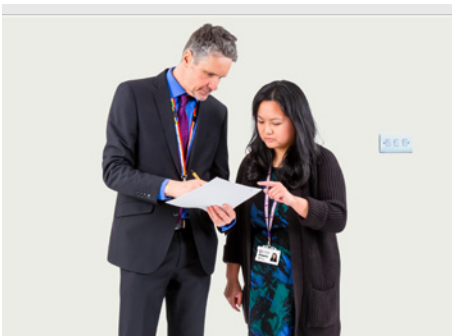
This group was called the **National Security Committee.**



There could have been other people from the Government in the National Security Committee.



The Government made lots of new laws so people could get support in COVID-19.



The Government could have worked together better to do the work.

What we learned



We need good leaders to help keep people safe in a pandemic.



The leaders in different parts of the Government need to work together.



Leaders who make decisions need to think about all the different issues.



There should be information that says what leaders need to think about to make decisions.

4. Use evidence to make decisions



The Government needs to use evidence when it makes decisions in a pandemic.



At the start of COVID-19 there was not a lot of evidence.



The Government used evidence about COVID-19 from other countries.



This was hard when the evidence for other countries did not mean the same thing for Australia.



Our Governments did a good job of sharing information with each other.

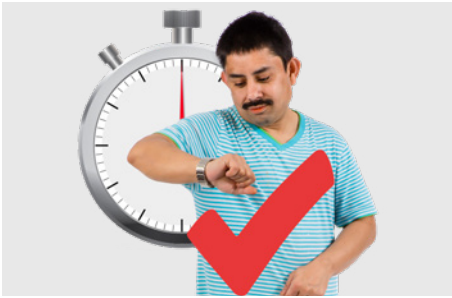


But the information did not look into how COVID-19 was for different groups.



The Government should check the things it did in the pandemic to see how they worked.

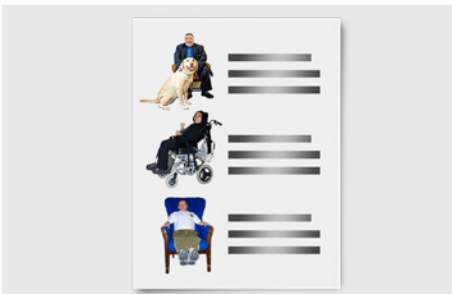
What we learned



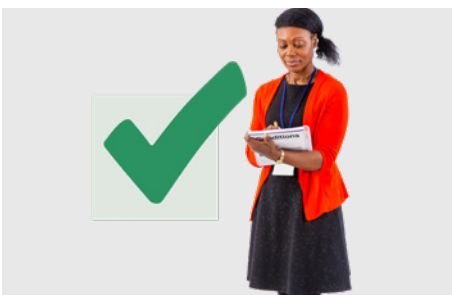
We need a way to find evidence quickly when a pandemic starts.



Our Government needs to have ways to share information with each other.



This information needs to say what the different groups of people in Australia need.



We need to check if things are working and make changes if they are not.

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