

A Grade Round 1

That people who are unvaccinated for COVID-19 by choice should not have access to the public health system

Background:

According to the ABC on 14 January 2022, we can expect 80% of all Australians to be vaccinated by early March 2022. Vaccine uptake has been significantly high, with unvaccinated people over-represented in Intensive Care Units.

Much like schooling, healthcare is split between public and private systems. Currently, anyone can choose to be treated in the public system rather than paying for private treatment.

Many argue that the public health system has been put under extreme stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that it is unable to effectively deal with its workload.

Some argue that in a democracy, we all ought to have the right to choose. But others argue that choosing not to be vaccinated is putting society at risk, and therefore access to public healthcare funding should be restricted.

Criminals are an example of people losing their rights. If they choose to murder someone, the state removes their freedoms by placing them into the prison system.

Read the topic carefully: Those who cannot be vaccinated because they are medically unable are not the at risk of being excluded by the topic. It is only those who choose not to be fully vaccinated.

Questions for consideration:

- How many people would be excluded from the public health system? Is that a significant number?
- Is the public health system able to cope with its current workload? How can that be fixed?
- Does freedom of choice matter?
- How far does freedom of choice extend?
- How could unvaccinated individuals act if this is changed?
- Are there risks to people working or being cared for in the public health service?

Resources:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-02/charting-australias-covid-vaccine-rollout/13197518>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-02-03/how-to-interpret-omicron-covid-vaccination-rates-in-icu-hospital/100800114>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/healthcare-system-in-Victoria>

<https://www.hospitalhealth.com.au/content/aged-allied-health/article/nwmpfn-calls-for-urgent-structural-changes-to-primary-care-1328831469>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/feb/04/occupy-canberra-behind-the-anti-vaccine-protests-at-parliament-house>

<https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/the-australian-health-system>