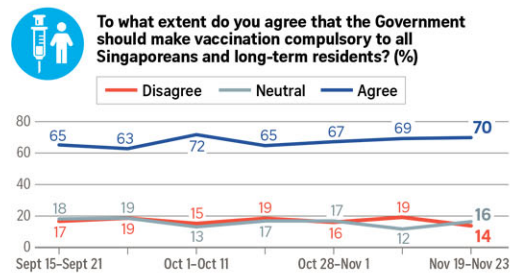
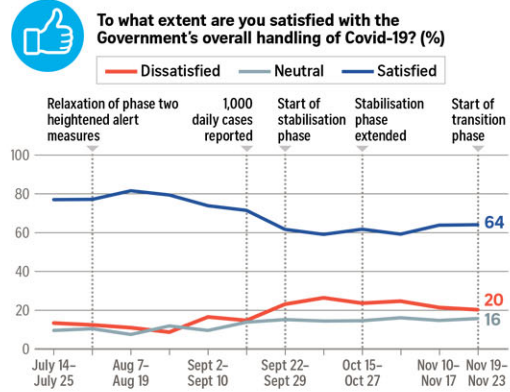
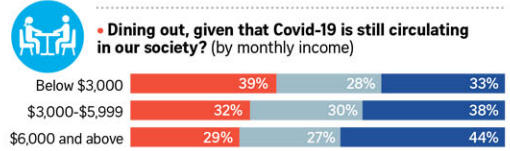
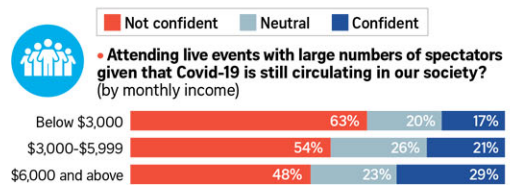


Coronavirus Singapore

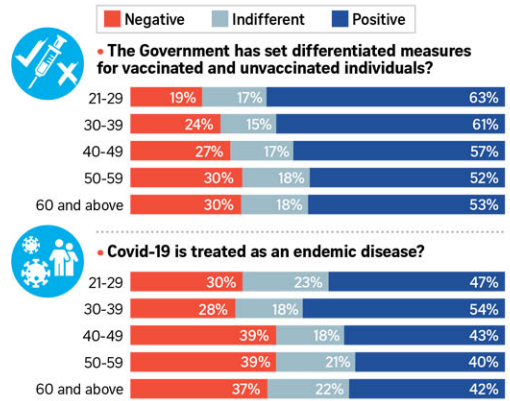
Living with Covid-19 in Singapore



TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU CONFIDENT OF...



WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS WHEN YOU CONSIDER HOW...



NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.
Source: INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

7 in 10 feel jabs should be mandatory for citizens: Study

Most also support annual booster jabs to protect themselves, others from infection

Linette Lai
Health Correspondent

The majority of people believe Covid-19 vaccination should be compulsory for citizens and long-term residents, with seven out of 10 people expressing these views in a recent survey published by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS).

Most people also agreed that getting an annual booster shot would help to prevent themselves and others from being infected, with eight in 10 saying they would go for their booster jabs when given the opportunity to do so.

But the reaction to differentiated measures for unvaccinated people was more mixed. While most people said they were pleasantly surprised, reassured or happy for such rules to be put in place, the elderly expressed particularly negative sentiments.

Around 30 per cent of those aged 60 and above felt anger, sadness or anxiety over such measures, compared with 19 per cent of those aged 21 to 29. This could be because seniors



Visitors at the vaccination centre at Sengkang Community Club in October. Most people surveyed by IPS believe that Covid-19 vaccination should be compulsory for citizens and long-term residents. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

make up a "sizeable proportion" of those who have not been vaccinated for non-medical reasons, researchers surmised.

The IPS study used data from online surveys conducted over 12 phases, or "waves", from mid-July to end-November. Each wave col-

lected responses from more than 500 residents aged 21 years and older.

This time period covered the relaxation and subsequent tightening of various Covid-19 measures, as infection numbers spiked in September and stricter rules were put in place to preserve Singapore's healthcare capacity.

Approval for home recovery being the default option rose from 51 per cent to 62 per cent between mid-October and end-November, with two-thirds of respondents saying they would rather recover at home than in a community care facility.

As part of the survey, people were also presented with two scenarios for Singapore's reopening and asked to pick which they favoured.

The first: a slow reopening which would limit Covid-19 deaths to two a day, similar to the death rate of the seasonal flu.

The second: a faster reopening which would result in six to seven deaths daily.

The participants overwhelmingly picked the first option with a lower death toll, regardless of when they were surveyed.

Overall satisfaction with the Government's handling of the pandemic started at around 77 per cent in July but fell sharply as cases climbed, and hit a low of 59 per cent in early October when stricter measures were implemented.

But satisfaction levels subsequently climbed back up to 64 per cent in mid-November, when Singapore eased several restrictions.

"There's a certain kind of pragmatic logic that Singaporeans apply to how they look at satisfaction with government," said IPS principal research fellow Mathew Mathews, who led the study.

"It's very much dependent on how they see certain kinds of goals achieved, and of course one of these goals has got to do with the number of cases and deaths. That's on people's minds, even though we are moving towards an endemic phase."

linette@sph.com.sg

Seniors, poor most likely to feel uneasy over reopening, resuming activities

The poor and the elderly in Singapore were most likely to feel uneasy over the country's decision to live with Covid-19, a new report from the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) has found.

These groups were also less confident about resuming social and leisure activities, such as dining out or attending large live events. This was likely because they were more physically vulnerable to the virus, or less able to handle the economic impact of being infected, researchers said.

"Those who were younger and more affluent were consistently observed to be more enthusiastic and ready for endemic living, compared to those who were older and less affluent," said IPS principal research fellow Mathew Mathews, who led the study.

"It's to be expected," he added.

"We do know from the science that those who are older may be affected more adversely, so obviously their appetite for endemic living might be more muted."

The IPS report on attitudes towards living with Covid-19 was released yesterday. It used data from online surveys conducted from mid-July to end-November in over 12 phases, each with more than 500 residents aged 21 years and older.

In general, older people expressed less confidence about dining out and taking public transport compared with their younger counterparts. For instance, 40 per cent of those aged 60 and above said they were not confident of dining out amid the pandemic, compared with 25 per cent of those aged between 21 and 29.

People with lower incomes also tended to be less sure of attending

large live events and taking part in leisure travel.

Some 63 per cent of those earning less than \$3,000 a month said they were not confident of leisure travel to countries with low case numbers, compared with 43 per cent of those earning \$6,000 and above.

In terms of how Singapore's political leadership managed the Covid-19 pandemic, some 31 per cent of those aged 60 and older felt that the authorities had not showed good political leadership so far, compared with 19 per cent of the youngest age group.

And 25 per cent of those in the lowest income bracket felt the same way, compared with 21 per cent for the middle and higher income groups.

This could indicate discontent with how the elderly have been treated, researchers said.

"The emphasis on keeping the elderly safe from the virus, the constant reminder to vaccinate and the discouragement of seniors attending social gatherings has led some elderly to feel alone, shut out from and becoming less satisfied with daily life as they see their younger counterparts slowly taking up their social activities once again."

Associate Professor Walter Theiseira, an economist at the Singapore University of Social Sciences, said the findings reflect what Singapore has known for some time - that there is a gap between different groups of people in terms of readiness to reopen the country.

Prof Theiseira, who was not involved in the study, said: "These gaps also reflect what are broader divides in Singapore, between those who are internationally mobile, affluent, and whose jobs and lifestyles depend to a large extent on Singapore's successful reopening, and those whose day-to-day lives are little affected - as they perceive it - whether Singapore is reopened or not."

Linette Lai

1,101 new cases; weekly infection growth rate up slightly to 0.7

Wong Shiying

The Ministry of Health (MOH) reported 1,101 new Covid-19 infections in Singapore yesterday, down from 1,324 on Wednesday.

The intensive care unit (ICU) utilisation rate was at 56.4 per cent, down from 59.7 per cent on Wednesday, said MOH in its daily update.

The Covid-19 weekly infection growth rate was at 0.7, up from 0.67 on Wednesday. This was the

The Covid-19 weekly infection growth rate was at 0.7, up from 0.67 on Wednesday. This was the 20th day in a row that the growth rate has been below one.

20th day in a row that the growth rate has been below one.

The number refers to the ratio of community cases in the past week over the week before.

A weekly infection growth rate that is consistently below one shows that the number of new weekly Covid-19 cases is falling.

Nine people aged between 56 and 99 died of complications linked to Covid-19, said MOH. All of them had various underlying medical conditions, it added, without giving further details.

The latest deaths take the total number of fatalities in Singapore to 735.

Over the last 28 days, 98.7 per cent of local Covid-19 cases were asymptomatic or had mild symptoms, 0.9 per cent required oxygen supplementation in a general ward, 0.2 per cent were in the ICU and 0.2 per cent died.

The new infections comprised 1,050 cases in the community, 41 in migrant worker dormitories and 10 imported cases.

Of the community cases, 155 are seniors aged 60 and above.

The total number of cases in Singapore now stands at 267,150.

As at yesterday, 87 per cent of the total population have either completed the full vaccination regimen or had two shots, and 27 per cent have taken booster shots.

sywong@sph.com.sg

Covid-19: Latest update (Dec 2)

