

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Easing restrictions during vaccine scarcity. How mitigation measures help tackling associated moral and behavioral challenges

Policy Brief, Public Health Rev

Reviewer: Nicola Diviani

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EVALUATION

Q 1 what are the main findings and conclusions reported in this manuscript?

The study provides evidence on how, from a behavioral perspective, unequal treatment of vaccinated and recovered persons can produce unintended side effects, including perverse incentives, crumbling Covid-19 rule compliance, growing rifts in society, and expansion of marginalization. The authors propose some recommendation to prevent the negative side effects of easing for vaccinated and recovered individuals, which focus on mitigation measures for individuals who are neither vaccinated nor recovered. Specifically, they suggest that easing of measure should be applied also to negative-tested individuals and that the state has to ensure broad and easy access to testing for everyone - free of charge.

The authors conclude that mitigation measures can create equal opportunities to freedom for everybody, help reduce inequalities and prevent possible negative consequences.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and advantages.

The manuscript is well written and provides relevant evidence in support of its conclusions. I wonder, however, why did the authors decide to only focus on Germany in the background section, as this is an issue that affects the whole world. Expanding the scope of the manuscript would be extremely beneficial, as it would make the discussion and the recommendations more relevant independently from the current status of measures in a specific country.

Q 3 Are there objective errors or fundamental flaws? If yes, please detail your concerns.

No.

Q 4 Check List

Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes.

Does the manuscript provide an appropriate context for a non-technical audience?

Yes.

Does the manuscript use language that can be understood by a non-technical audience?

Yes.

Is the quality of figures and/or tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Is the evidence presented appropriate, sound and objective?

Yes.

Are the action points provided based on the evidence?

Yes.

Are the action points provided reasonable and feasible?

Yes.

Are there any ethical issues with the recommendations provided?

No.

Q 5 Please provide your detailed review report to the editor and authors (including any comments on the Q4 Check List):

Overall the paper is well written and nicely reviews current evidence to come to sound recommendations. My main concern, as I highlighted in Q2, is related to the decision to focus on Germany in the background section. This limits the generalizability of the recommendations and makes them very much linked to the context and a specific point in time (I wonder for instance if the situation in German is still the one described in the study). I would therefore advise to broaden the focus (this would not impact on the conclusions), so to make the paper relevant also for future pandemic situations (the current situation could be used as a case in point to learn from). Also, I advise the authors to rethink the title: the current one is redundant (easing restrictions is repeated twice).

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 6 Originality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 7 Rigor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 8 Significance to the field	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 9 Interest to a general audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 10 Quality of the writing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 11 Overall quality of the study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REVISION LEVEL

Q 12 Please take a decision based on your comments:

Major revisions.