Virality Project Weekly Briefing #4

January 12, 2021 - January 19, 2021

Key Narratives

- Reported strong adverse reactions and deaths after receiving the vaccine continue to be used to fuel concerns about the safety of the vaccine.
- Health freedom groups are using news of these adverse reaction events to suggest the vaccines are unsafe and to drum up fear against vaccine mandates.

Be On the Lookout For:

- Stories of individuals with negative reactions after receiving the vaccine may gain immediate attention online.
- News events, especially misleading headlines from mainstream media outlets, may be used by fringe anti-vaccine groups to try to legitimize concerns about COVID-19 vaccines and other conspiratorial claims.
- As vaccination rates continue to increase, discussions of vaccine mandates among health freedom groups may fuel concerns about safety and government distrust.

Narrative: Safety Concerns

- Three main stories of reactions and deaths after receiving the COVID vaccine have spread from anti-vaccination pages to more mainstream Facebook Groups, Twitter, and Instagram accounts.
  1. The story of a Miami-based doctor who died in early January has resurfaced in anti-vaccination Facebook Groups after a New York Times article. The article has received roughly 2.2k interactions as part of anti-vaccination posts while a spin off article on a high-profile anti-vaccination blog has received over 10.3k interactions.
  2. The story of deaths in a Norway nursing home has been pushed by Russian state media, a popular hip hop Instagram account, and high-profile anti-vaccination advocate Robert Kennedy Jr.
  3. Videos of people supposedly convulsing after receiving the vaccine have gone viral on Facebook. Screen recordings are reposted even after the videos are removed.
- Articles with misleading headlines and quotes, such as “Doctor’s Death After COVID Vaccine is Being Investigated”, are backing posts across Facebook Groups.
- Clarifications within articles that deaths are most likely not related to the vaccine do not impact discussion. Rather, some anti-vaccine advocates are spinning the idea of “unrelated coincidences” as proof of “Big Pharma” cover up.

Narrative: State Legislation and Federal Overreach

- A CNET article reporting that Biden’s vaccination plans will include activating FEMA and the National Guard for distribution has received 71K Facebook interactions. Posts in Anti-Vaccine
and Health Freedom Groups combine descriptions of this plan with concerns about safety suggesting that this is a scary overreach of federal power.

- Social media posts discussing a proposed Oregon required immunizations bill and a Texas anti-vaccine mandate bill saw engagement in anti-vaccine mandate groups.

State Media Activity

- Foreign state media, particularly Russian state media, also publicized adverse reaction events, using them to call into question the safety of Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines.
- Some state media posts focused on frustrations over slow vaccine rollouts and potential vaccine mandates. (see Appendix for examples)
### Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description and additional links</th>
<th>Screenshot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miami Doctor Story Post Links</strong></td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Facebook: Children’s Health Defense</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Facebook: Vaxxed</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Examples of use of VAERS data</strong></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Facebook: Children’s Health Defense</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Facebook: Health Freedom Minnesota (with example of “Missing Context” label)</td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Screenshot" /></td>
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**VAERS ID: 914961** - Nursing home patient was 14 + days post Covid and unresponsive. They passed within 90 minutes of receiving the Covid vaccine.
Norway nursing home:

- Instagram: MyMixtapez
- Twitter: Robert Kennedy Jr.

Facebook video of patients convulsing after receiving vaccine.

First video is of Shawn Skelton, a CNA of 25-years, who received the Moderna "experimental biologic" on January 4th......
Second video is of Brant Griner’s mother who received the Pfizer “experimental biologic” just days ago.
Wake up, people! The manufacturers of these experimental biologics are LIABILITY FREE and Shawn’s doctors are already discrediting it is from the jab.
PLEASE WAKE UP.
State Media Action:

- RT on Facebook pushing stories about side effects, including convulsions, of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine

All 13 victims were frail and elderly people who had unusually strong reactions to the jabs.

'We see nothing alarming,' says Norwegian drugs regulator, after 13 deaths linked to Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine, the national...

Fears over the vaccine's safety were prompted by a video of a woman suffering convulsions after receiving a Pfizer coronavirus jab in Louisiana. In an exclusive interview with RT, Brant Griner, son of the affected person, says that she hadn't experienced any health issues before taking the shot, and added that the response he'd received to his video about it... See More