



# CanCOVID Speaker Series Event Summary



## Managing the Infodemic for Public Health: A Call to Action for an Evidence-Based Approach

### Speaker

Christine Czerniak, PhD

### Objective

This summary provides an overview of the Speaker Series presentation on 'Managing the Infodemic for Public Health: A Call to Action for an Evidence-Based Approach.' The aim of this talk was to share information about World Health Organization initiatives to engage experts in the development of a public health research agenda to accelerate research and funding into infodemic interventions and management.

### Key Messages

- The world is facing an infodemic, alongside the COVID-19 pandemic, whereby there is an overabundance of information that is impacting the public's ability to make decisions about their health. This includes the spread of misinformation and disinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing to behaviours with public health consequences, such as vaccine hesitancy.
- Misinformation is becoming more sophisticated, appearing more scientific with the potential for a greater reach. There is a need to better manage, build, and maintain trust with the public, as well as a need to keep trust in science, and to reduce susceptibility to misinformation.
- The WHO has undertaken various initiatives on the spread of misinformation. The Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN) social listening program uses analytics to better understand what type of misinformation is spreading, and how, each week. This is important for establishing a more adaptive public health response to COVID-19 and developing collaborative social programs to address the concerns of the public.

### Implications/Next Steps

- There is a need to investigate attempts to undermine public health measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, as they may further exacerbate the pandemic, as well as to establish a healthier communication ecosystem. Investing in education to build health literacy, digital literacy, science literacy, and media literacy is important in addressing threats to health security, such as misinformation.

[Click here to view the recording of this event.](#)