

From: [redacted] fb.com]
Sent: 7/19/2021 1:34:04 PM
To: [redacted] hhs.gov]
CC: [redacted] fb.com]; [redacted] hhs.gov]; [redacted] fb.com]; [redacted] fb.com]
Subject: Re: Message from [redacted]

Hi [redacted]

Thanks so much for getting back to me – really appreciate that.

Adding [redacted] here to liaise with your office to find a time asap which is convenient for you – I'm in Spain right now but hopefully time differences can be navigated so that we speak soon enough.

All best

[redacted]

From: "Murthy, Vivek (HHS/OASH)" [redacted]
Date: Monday, July 19, 2021 at 3:29 PM
To: [redacted] p.com>
Cc: [redacted] fb.com>, [redacted] hhs.gov>, [redacted]
[redacted] hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Message from [redacted]

Hi [redacted]

Thanks for reaching out and for sharing your concerns. I know the last few days have been challenging. I'd be happy to speak directly about how we move forward. Let me know the best way to schedule some time later this week and we'll make it happen.

Best wishes and will talk soon,

[redacted]

--

[redacted]

The information in this e-mail and its attachments are confidential, pre-decisional and deliberative. Contents may include sensitive information and are for official use only. If you are not the original intended recipient, please delete the content and notify the sender.

From: [redacted] fb.com>
Sent: Friday, July 16, 2021 5:43 PM
To: Murthy, Vivek (HHS/OASH) [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] fb.com>
Subject: Message from [redacted]

Dear [redacted]

Reaching out after what has transpired over the past few days following the publication of the misinformation advisory, and culminating today in the President's remarks about us. I know our teams met today to better understand the scope of what the White House expects from us on misinformation going forward.

In our previous conversations I've appreciated the way you and your team have approached our engagement, and we have worked hard to meet the moment — we've dedicated enormous time and resources to fighting this pandemic and consider ourselves to be partners in fighting the same battle. Certainly we understand (and have understood for some time) that there is disagreement on some of the policies governing our approach and how they are being enforced — even as your team has acknowledged the unprecedented scale of our efforts to provide authoritative information to millions of Americans and to help them get vaccinated. But I thought the way we were singled out over the past few days has been both surprising and misleading, and I believe unproductive to our joint efforts too.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak directly to discuss a path forward with you and how we can continue to work toward what I sincerely believe are shared goals.

Yours

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

From: [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Sent: 8/20/2021 3:08:20 PM
To: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]
CC: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Subject: Facebook Covid actions

Dear [REDACTED]

Many thanks again for the recent opportunity to discuss our Covid related work. You asked for an update on existing and new steps that Facebook is taking. As you know, Facebook takes its responsibility during this prolonged, unprecedented public health crisis extremely seriously. In light of our conversation we have been reviewing our efforts to combat COVID-19, and are eager to continue working towards our shared goal of helping more people get vaccinated and limiting the spread of harmful misinformation.

The White House described four recommendations to social media platforms in July, which cover access to authoritative information, enforcement and speed of enforcement, and transparency. Those are priorities we have shared throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In this update, we describe both our historic actions in these areas, as well as new information on boosting access to authoritative information, and further policy work to enable stronger action against persistent distributors of vaccine misinformation. Finally, as agreed at our last meeting, we remain eager to meet with you and/or your team about our ideas regarding data that could potentially be shared with the public.

Elevating access to better information

We continue to review, experiment and adapt to find better ways to increase access to quality information, as we have done since the start of the pandemic:

- We have heard your and others' concern that people should be better able to access authoritative information on our platform. We agree, and have already taken action to make it easier for people to find more authoritative and trusted information in News Feed. We would be happy to describe these efforts to you in a specific briefing.
- We continue to help people directly access accurate information through the COVID Information Center, and will keep adding to this as the situation evolves and especially as guidance for various populations is updated - including when children should get vaccinated, and when the already vaccinated should be getting boosters.
- So far we have connected over 2 billion people globally with resources about COVID, and in the US alone we've helped over 4 million people get vaccinated through our Vaccine Finder, which connects them with appointment information, directions, and contact information.
- We're continuing to refine how we help health partners reach communities with less access to information or lower vaccination rates, leveraging the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other resources to reach those populations with high-quality, authoritative information.

Limiting Potentially Harmful Information

We continue to improve and refine measures that reduce the spread of potentially harmful content and limit the distribution of actors who share misleading information about COVID and the vaccine:

- We will shortly be expanding our COVID policies to further reduce the spread of potentially harmful content on our platform. These changes will apply across Facebook and Instagram.
 - We are increasing the strength of our demotions for COVID and vaccine-related content that third party fact checkers rate as "Partly False" or "Missing Context." That content will now be demoted at the same strength that we demote any content on our platform rated "False."
 - We are making it easier to have Pages/Groups/Accounts demoted for sharing COVID and vaccine-related misinformation by also counting content removals under our COVID and vaccine-related Community Standards violations towards their demotion threshold.
 - Any entity linked to another entity that is removed for violating our COVID or vaccine misinformation policies will be rendered "non-recommendable" on our platform.
 - Lastly, we will also be strengthening our existing demotion penalties for websites that are repeatedly fact-checked for COVID and vaccine misinformation content shared on our platform. Together, we intend for these policies to further limit the traction that misinformation can get on our platform.

- To date, we've removed over 20 million pieces of content for COVID- and vaccine-related misinformation. We've also taken action against people who repeatedly post content that violates our policies. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have removed over 3,000 accounts, Pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID and vaccine misinformation.
- We've specifically investigated the people sometimes identified in the media as the 'Disinfo Dozen'. We've applied penalties to some of their website domains as well so any posts, including their website content, are moved lower in News Feed. The remaining accounts associated with these individuals are not posting content that breaks our rules, have only posted a small amount of violating content, which we've removed, or are simply inactive. In fact, these 12 people are responsible for about just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook. This includes all vaccine-related posts they've shared, whether true or false, as well as URLs associated with these people. In total we have removed three dozen Pages, groups and Facebook or Instagram accounts linked to these 12 people, including at least one linked to each of the 12 people, for violating our policies.
- We continue to notify people when content that they have interacted with is removed for violating our policies on COVID and vaccines.
- We have implemented and continue to experiment with signals that we can use -- around specific kinds of sharing behavior, specific page types, and specific types of language, among other factors -- to demote content that we predict will contain low quality information.

Increasing Transparency

We will continue to seek to ensure the actions we are taking (as well as misses) are apparent and discernible by people who don't work at Facebook. We are especially keen to discuss with you what form shared data could take in order to be most valuable to analysts and researchers, both inside and outside of government.

In terms of what we're doing now:

- We already have a wide amount of data available for analysis through our academic partnerships like FORT, but we are keenly aware that more kinds of data, or more specific cuts, may be valuable to the people actively looking to study this area more closely. We also share data with the public through our quarterly Community Standards Enforcement Report releases, [most recently this past Wednesday](#), and have also [just launched a Widely View Content Report](#) to further increase transparency with the public.
- We are currently deep in internal discussions to identify the best ways we can share with the public information about some of the most widely viewed content on Facebook. We're actively considering how we can best share that information so that it is valuable to the public and to researchers, which to the best of our knowledge no other company provides.
- We're also looking at ways we can produce more data and deeper data sets that can create richer opportunities for researchers to analyse the reach of various kinds of content.
- We have examined the distribution patterns of the so-called 'Disinfo Dozen' (as above - <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/taking-action-against-vaccine-misinformation-superspreaders/>).
- To advance public understanding of how social media and behavioral sciences can be leveraged to improve the health of communities around the world, we've supported researchers attempting to understand social media's role in the ongoing pandemic. One report [has already been published](#), and we are pleased to see that social media can have positive impacts on public health needs. There are other researchers we are supporting, and look forward to reviewing their work as it is completed and peer reviewed.
- While separate from the issue of content online, researchers are also able to access our COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey, which is a global survey gathering insights about symptoms, testing, mask-wearing, social distancing, mental health, vaccine acceptance, reasons for vaccine hesitancy, and more. We believe this is the largest public health survey in history. Over 70 million responses from more than 200 countries and territories have been collected, and the data can be broken down by self-reported demographic information like gender and race as well as by hyper-local geographic regions. The data is available in near real-time and is collected off-platform by academic partners at the University of Maryland (UMD) and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Academic and nonprofit researchers are able request access to non-public, non-aggregated survey data for their research.

I hope this is a useful update, pending further work and discussions we will continue to update you and your teams and we are happy to meet and discuss any of the work we have outlined here. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my team with any further questions.

Best wishes,



From: [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Sent: 7/10/2021 8:00:40 AM
To: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]
CC: Slavitt, Andrew M. [REDACTED]@who.eop.gov]; [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Subject: Re: Facebook Covid report
Attachments: 7_8 - COVID-19 Insights.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

Attached is the latest Covid report covering the most recent two week period for which we have stats etc. I understand from [REDACTED] that my team is meeting with yours next week to delve deeper into our covid misinformation efforts. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out when/if needed.

All best

From: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Friday, June 25, 2021 at 11:19 PM
To: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: "Slavitt, Andrew M. [REDACTED]@who.eop.gov>, [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Facebook Covid report

Dear [REDACTED]

Attached is the latest Covid report covering the past two weeks. As always, happy to answer any questions you might have with respect to the report's contents.

Additionally, I want to highlight two vaccine-related efforts that launched this week:

The first is the [WhatsApp chat bot](#) we launched with the CDC. This Spanish-language bot not only surfaces local vaccine appointments, it also links users with free Uber/Lyft rides to their appointments and childcare availability nearby. We're excited by the impact this will have on the LatinX vaccination rate.

Second, I wanted to share that we launched a notification to every Instagram user in the United States encouraging them to visit vaccines.gov. After months of state-specific notifications to IG's +150M users in the US, this is Instagram's first push to vaccines.gov. Based on the demographics of Instagram, we're looking forward to reaching the nation's youth and to having a positive impact on their vaccination rates.

Thanks and please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best

From: [REDACTED] fb.com]
Sent: 6/25/2021 6:19:30 PM
To: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]
CC: Slavitt, Andrew [REDACTED] who.eop.gov]; [REDACTED] fb.com]
Subject: Facebook Covid report
Attachments: 6_25 - COVID-19 Insights.pdf

Dear [REDACTED],

Attached is the latest Covid report covering the past two weeks. As always, happy to answer any questions you might have with respect to the report's contents.

Additionally, I want to highlight two vaccine-related efforts that launched this week:

The first is the [WhatsApp chat bot](#) we launched with the CDC. This Spanish-language bot not only surfaces local vaccine appointments, it also links users with free Uber/Lyft rides to their appointments and childcare availability nearby. We're excited by the impact this will have on the LatinX vaccination rate.

Second, I wanted to share that we launched a notification to every Instagram user in the United States encouraging them to visit vaccines.gov. After months of state-specific notifications to IG's +150M users in the US, this is Instagram's first push to vaccines.gov. Based on the demographics of Instagram, we're looking forward to reaching the nation's youth and to having a positive impact on their vaccination rates.

Thanks and please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] [fb.com]
Sent: 6/12/2021 9:28:58 PM
To: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov
CC: [REDACTED]@who.eop.gov; [REDACTED] [fb.com]
Subject: Facebook bi-weekly covid content report
Attachments: 6_11 - COVID-19 Insights.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

As promised/discussed, the latest Facebook bi-weekly covid content report attached. As always, I'm happy to jump on a call at any point – as is my team – to delve into any details further as needed.

All best

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] fb.com]
 Sent: 5/28/2021 5:48:14 PM
 To: Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO [REDACTED] who.eop.gov]; [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]
 CC: [REDACTED] fb.com]
 Subject: Message from [REDACTED]
 Attachments: 5_28 - COVID-19 Insights.pdf

Dear Andy, dear [REDACTED] (if I may),

Thanks again for the time the other day.

As promised, I'm sending our latest report that includes topline performing posts for the weeks of 5/3-5/9 and 5/9-5/15. Report is attached, and myself and the team are of course happy to discuss anything within.

I also want to highlight a few policy updates we announced yesterday regarding repeat misinformation. The full Newsroom post with product mock ups is available [here](#), but I wanted to call out a few key points:

1. We've added more context about Pages that repeatedly share false claims;
2. We are expanding penalties for individual Facebook accounts that share misinformation; and
3. We've redesigned notifications when they share content that a fact-checker later rates.

Finally, I wanted to include here the data I mentioned on our call earlier that point to the positive (if not as publicly discussed) influence we're having on attitudes toward vaccines:

Overall trends in vaccine acceptance amongst Facebook users are positive: this has increased considerably since January, and racial/ethnic disparities have also decreased.

Since January, vaccine acceptance in the US from a daily survey of Facebook users (done in partnership with CMU) has *increased* by 10-15 percentage points (e.g. 70 %-> 80-85%), and racial/ethnic disparities in acceptance have shrunk considerably (e.g. some of the populations that had the lowest acceptance in January had the highest increases since).

Not only are the overall trends increasing, we also have data showing our efforts are contributing: including some of our specific collaborations with HHS/CDC and work around trusted messengers and messaging.

Over the same time period, we've been working closely with partners to run the largest scale on line campaign in support of vaccination efforts. We've delivered over 10B ad impressions from health partners worldwide since January, and have also run significant on-platform product promotions. These have been focused on 3 goals: i) increase access to vaccines; ii) help people get questions answered; iii) socially normalize the vaccine.

Early evidence that these are increasing drivers of vaccination, at scale, include:

- **Social Norming: 50 percent of Facebook users have seen someone they follow (e.g. friend, family member, community leader, public figure) use an HHS/CDC vaccine frame.** [Research from MIT shows](#) that similar types of social normalization efforts can meaningfully improve people's likelihood to get vaccinated, which is consistent with other [expert advice](#) (e.g. "Encouraging those who are vaccinated to show their vaccination status with pride, both online and offline, can nudge their family, friends and networks to follow suit."). We are seeing some encouraging preliminary results in vaccine sentiment (the safety and importance of COVID-19 vaccines) in the US through our surveys as a result of vaccine profile frame promotions. As a result, we are scaling the launch of these features globally.
- **Access: Over 3M people have used our Vaccine Finder since March, developed in partnership with Boston Children's Hospital.** We've been promoting Vaccine Finder and eligibility information to all people on Facebook in close partnership with states, which are seeing impact. For example, West Virginia reported a meaningful increase in vaccine registrations after we started our efforts.
- **Education: A single "Facts about COVID19" News Feed campaign — that reached 100s of millions of people worldwide--increased belief in key facts about vaccine safety and testing by 3% across 5 countries.** We've directed 2B+

people to expert health resources through the Covid Info Center, which in the US includes information from local county-level public health departments. We observed a particularly large increase in vaccine acceptance within certain populations in the US. Vaccine acceptance increased 26% among Black adults and 14% among Hispanic adults.

- **Equity: We're more frequently reaching people in areas with lower vaccination rates using CDC's Social Vulnerability Index.** We are partnering with a wide range of organizations to deliver trusted, accessible messages; Spanish-language campaigns from AARP and Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health; and CARE US for conservative audiences. Our work to promote information on how to get a vaccine to high-SVI zip codes increased confidence that people in those zip codes have in being able to get a vaccine.

This builds on work—and uses similar strategies—to what we did over the last few years to support flu vaccination, mask wearing, blood donation, and voting, all of which also had meaningful population-level positive impact.

- **Flu Vaccination:** We employed similar strategies with partners around a major flu vaccination campaign last fall. These reached 10s of millions of people in the US; some of these campaigns increased perceived safety or intent by 3-5%.

- **Mask Wearing:** Social normalization campaigns reaching millions of people featuring trusted public figures increased mask wearing behavior and attitudes by 3-8%. This included the "You Will See Me" campaign from CDC Foundation/Ad Council. Note that mask wearing attitudes and reported behaviors increased dramatically since early spring 2020, and by summer the [vast majority of all people in the US reported wearing masks](#), a trend mirrored in CMU's large-scale survey of Facebook users.

- **Blood Donations:** Our blood donations product—which notifies people nearby about opportunities to donate blood, and makes it easy for them to find a schedule an appointment—[increased first time donors across the US by 19% when we rolled it out](#) across sites from the American Red Cross, Vitalant, Versiti, and New York Blood Centers.

We think there's considerably more we can do in partnership with you and your teams to drive behavior. We're also committed to addressing the defensive work around misinformation that you've called on us to address. But we don't want to miss the full story of Facebook's impact on attitudes toward vaccine acceptance—we believe our work is paying real dividends in the form of more people getting shots, and we believe data bears this out. We're eager to find additional ways to partner with you.

All my best wishes,

██████

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 6/14/2021 3:34:01 AM
To: [REDACTED] [fb.com]
CC: Slavitt, Andrew M. [REDACTED] [hhs.gov]; [REDACTED] [who.eop.gov]; [REDACTED] [fb.com]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Facebook bi-weekly covid content report

Many thanks for sharing this [REDACTED] I'll look forward to reviewing it.

Hope you're keeping well,
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 12, 2021, at 9:29 PM, [REDACTED] [fb.com] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

As promised/discussed, the latest Facebook bi-weekly covid content report attached. As always, I'm happy to jump on a call at any point – as is my team – to delve into any details further as needed.

All best

[REDACTED]
<6_11 - COVID-19 Insights.pdf>

From: [REDACTED] fb.com]
Sent: 8/31/2021 3:43:19 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED] hhs.gov]
Subject: Re: Facebook Covid actions

Flag: Follow up

Hi [REDACTED]—hope you're well. Just checking back in on setting a potential meeting—don't want it to fall through the cracks on our end.

Thanks—look forward to being in touch.

From: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Date: Monday, August 23, 2021 at 10:38 AM
To: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: RE: Facebook Covid actions

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks so much for following up. I'll circle with [REDACTED] and the team. Definitely want to keep moving the ball forward.

Best,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 4:11 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED] hhs.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Facebook Covid actions

Hi [REDACTED]—following up just with you. We wanted to make sure to get you our latest plan within the two week window that you requested, but this represents a snapshot of where we are today, not a final destination. We're continuing to look for ways to be responsive, and would very much like to schedule time with [REDACTED] to cover possible approaches for increased transparency.

Let me know if helpful to connect.

Thanks and have a good weekend.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 3:08:20 PM
To: [REDACTED] hhs.gov [REDACTED] hhs.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED] hhs.gov>; [REDACTED] gmail.com [REDACTED] gmail.com>; [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: Facebook Covid actions

Dear Surgeon General

Many thanks again for the recent opportunity to discuss our Covid related work. You asked for an update on existing and new steps that Facebook is taking. As you know, Facebook takes its responsibility during this prolonged, unprecedented public health crisis extremely seriously. In light of our conversation we have been reviewing our efforts to combat COVID-19, and are eager to continue working towards our shared goal of helping more people get vaccinated and limiting the spread of harmful misinformation.

The White House described four recommendations to social media platforms in July, which cover access to authoritative information, enforcement and speed of enforcement, and transparency. Those are priorities we have shared throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In this update, we describe both our historic actions in these areas, as well as new information on boosting access to authoritative information, and further policy work to enable stronger action against persistent distributors of vaccine misinformation. Finally, as agreed at our last meeting, we remain eager to meet with you and/or your team about our ideas regarding data that could potentially be shared with the public.

Elevating access to better information

We continue to review, experiment and adapt to find better ways to increase access to quality information, as we have done since the start of the pandemic:

- We have heard your and others' concern that people should be better able to access authoritative information on our platform. We agree, and have already taken action to make it easier for people to find more authoritative and trusted information in News Feed. We would be happy to describe these efforts to you in a specific briefing.
- We continue to help people directly access accurate information through the COVID Information Center, and will keep adding to this as the situation evolves and especially as guidance for various populations is updated - including when children should get vaccinated, and when the already vaccinated should be getting boosters.
- So far we have connected over 2 billion people globally with resources about COVID, and in the US alone we've helped over 4 million people get vaccinated through our Vaccine Finder, which connects them with appointment information, directions, and contact information.
- We're continuing to refine how we help health partners reach communities with less access to information or lower vaccination rates, leveraging the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other resources to reach those populations with high-quality, authoritative information.

Limiting Potentially Harmful Information

We continue to improve and refine measures that reduce the spread of potentially harmful content and limit the distribution of actors who share misleading information about COVID and the vaccine:

- We will shortly be expanding our COVID policies to further reduce the spread of potentially harmful content on our platform. These changes will apply across Facebook and Instagram.
 - We are increasing the strength of our demotions for COVID and vaccine-related content that third party fact checkers rate as "Partly False" or "Missing Context." That content will now be demoted at the same strength that we demote any content on our platform rated "False."
 - We are making it easier to have Pages/Groups/Accounts demoted for sharing COVID and vaccine-related misinformation by also counting content removals under our COVID and vaccine-related Community Standards violations towards their demotion threshold.
 - Any entity linked to another entity that is removed for violating our COVID or vaccine misinformation policies will be rendered "non-recommendable" on our platform.
 - Lastly, we will also be strengthening our existing demotion penalties for websites that are repeatedly fact-checked for COVID and vaccine misinformation content shared on our platform. Together, we intend for these policies to further limit the traction that misinformation can get on our platform.
- To date, we've removed over 20 million pieces of content for COVID- and vaccine-related misinformation. We've also taken action against people who repeatedly post content that violates our policies. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have removed over 3,000 accounts, Pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID and vaccine misinformation.
- We've specifically investigated the people sometimes identified in the media as the 'Disinfo Dozen'. We've applied penalties to some of their website domains as well so any posts, including their website content, are moved lower in News Feed. The remaining accounts associated with these individuals are not posting content that breaks our rules, have only posted a small amount of violating content, which we've removed, or are simply inactive. In fact, these 12 people are responsible for about just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook. This includes all vaccine-related posts they've shared, whether true or false, as well as URLs associated with these

people. In total we have removed three dozen Pages, groups and Facebook or Instagram accounts linked to these 12 people, including at least one linked to each of the 12 people, for violating our policies.

- We continue to notify people when content that they have interacted with is removed for violating our policies on COVID and vaccines.
- We have implemented and continue to experiment with signals that we can use -- around specific kinds of sharing behavior, specific page types, and specific types of language, among other factors -- to demote content that we predict will contain low quality information.

Increasing Transparency

We will continue to seek to ensure the actions we are taking (as well as misses) are apparent and discernible by people who don't work at Facebook. We are especially keen to discuss with you what form shared data could take in order to be most valuable to analysts and researchers, both inside and outside of government.

In terms of what we're doing now:

- We already have a wide amount of data available for analysis through our academic partnerships like FORT, but we are keenly aware that more kinds of data, or more specific cuts, may be valuable to the people actively looking to study this area more closely. We also share data with the public through our quarterly Community Standards Enforcement Report releases, [most recently this past Wednesday](#), and have also [just launched a Widely View Content Report](#) to further increase transparency with the public.
- We are currently deep in internal discussions to identify the best ways we can share with the public information about some of the most widely viewed content on Facebook. We're actively considering how we can best share that information so that it is valuable to the public and to researchers, which to the best of our knowledge no other company provides.
- We're also looking at ways we can produce more data and deeper data sets that can create richer opportunities for researchers to analyse the reach of various kinds of content.
- We have examined the distribution patterns of the so-called 'Disinfo Dozen' (as above - <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/taking-action-against-vaccine-misinformation-superspreaders/>).
- To advance public understanding of how social media and behavioral sciences can be leveraged to improve the health of communities around the world, we've supported researchers attempting to understand social media's role in the ongoing pandemic. One report [has already been published](#), and we are pleased to see that social media can have positive impacts on public health needs. There are other researchers we are supporting, and look forward to reviewing their work as it is completed and peer reviewed.
- While separate from the issue of content online, researchers are also able to access our COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey, which is a global survey gathering insights about symptoms, testing, mask-wearing, social distancing, mental health, vaccine acceptance, reasons for vaccine hesitancy, and more. We believe this is the largest public health survey in history. Over 70 million responses from more than 200 countries and territories have been collected, and the data can be broken down by self-reported demographic information like gender and race as well as by hyper-local geographic regions. The data is available in near real-time and is collected off-platform by academic partners at the University of Maryland (UMD) and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Academic and nonprofit researchers are able request access to non-public, non-aggregated survey data for their research.

I hope this is a useful update, pending further work and discussions we will continue to update you and your teams and we are happy to meet and discuss any of the work we have outlined here. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my team with any further questions.

Best wishes,



From: [REDACTED] fb.com]
Sent: 8/17/2021 5:27:28 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]; [REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov; DJ Patil [REDACTED]@gmail.com]
CC: [REDACTED] fb.com]
Subject: Re: Followup - data discussion

Hi DJ—hoping to get follow up time scheduled so that we can cover the landscape on data that we had discussed during our call with the Surgeon General—as we continue to think through on our end how we can be more transparent around vaccine content, it would be very helpful to make sure we are working from the understanding. Can we find time for our teams to get together soon?

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2021 9:02:07 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov> [REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov
[REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov>; DJ Patil <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Cc: [REDACTED] fb.com> [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: Re: Follow up - data discussion

Thanks [REDACTED]

Appreciate you connecting us to [REDACTED] here—and look forward to scheduling time for a longer conversation around data per our last meeting. [REDACTED]—let me know what would work best on your end. Our teams have been working on additional steps—we will have something back to you within two weeks outlining our approach.

Also including our latest bi-weekly report, which shows the top 100 most viewed overall posts on Facebook in the US, as well as the top vaccine related posts on Facebook in the US for the weeks of 7/11 - 7/17, and 7/18 - 7/24. Please distribute to whomever on the team might be interested, and let me know if you or anyone on the team has any questions.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2021 4:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Follow up - data discussion

Hi [REDACTED],

Hope your week has been going well. I wanted to loop [REDACTED] in on his gmail (where you may get a faster reply) on next steps for connecting about data.

Also [REDACTED]—I know on the call with [REDACTED] he'd mentioned seeing if you were able to send an update of any new/additional steps you are taking with respect to health misinformation in light of the advisory. We are asking all platforms for this type of update. Would you be able to send something over within two weeks?

Thanks so much,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 9:20 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>; [REDACTED] ostp.eop.gov
Cc: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: Re: Follow up - data discussion

[REDACTED]—making sure you saw this as well, as I know there's been a lot of attention directed toward vaccination mandates in recent days. Happy to connect on this front if helpful.

"As our offices reopen, we will be requiring anyone coming to work at any of our US campuses to be vaccinated. How we implement this policy will depend on local conditions and regulations. We will have a process for those who cannot be vaccinated for medical or other reasons and will be evaluating our approach in other regions as the situation evolves. We continue to work with experts to ensure our return to office plans prioritize everyone's health and safety." [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Date: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 5:42 PM
To: [REDACTED] fb.com>, [REDACTED] ostp.eop.gov [REDACTED] ostp.eop.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: RE: Follow up - data discussion

Really appreciate it.

From: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 5:41 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>; [REDACTED] ostp.eop.gov
Cc: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: Re: Follow up - data discussion

Got it—thanks [REDACTED] completely understand why you would have been a little busy this week! Will stand by, and will continue to be in touch as things develop on our end as well.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 5:34:10 PM
To: [REDACTED] fb.com>; [REDACTED] ostp.eop.gov <[REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] fb.com>
Subject: RE: Follow up - data discussion

Hey [REDACTED]

Thanks for your patience. The CDC updated guidance has kept us pretty busy this week (!). Appreciate these additional materials.

I'll circle back with more, but appreciate your understanding. [Also, [REDACTED] is out on leave for the rest of this week, so trying to sync calendars].

All the best,

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 1:16 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov> [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ostp.eop.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Follow up - data discussion

Hi [REDACTED] and DJ,

We're looking forward to our next meeting, where we are hoping to do a deeper dive on how we are measuring data and what steps we might be able to take to address concerns you've raised.

In the meantime, I wanted to make sure you have our response to the Washington Post piece from yesterday (linked [here](#)) that made certain claims based on survey data. Hoping this might be a useful addition to our conversation, along with making sure we cover the statistics put forward by the CCDH that have been cited by the White House regarding the disinfo dozen.

The statement is below — look forward to discussing next steps at your earliest convenience.

"The sensationalized, overstated findings of this research are not supported by what the authors report to have measured. It is unclear what their overall sample represents with respect to generalizability to the US population. For example it shows Fox News and CNN have the same size of audience, which they do not. Moreover what they claim as 'Facebook users' is a non-representative idiosyncratic subset of the Facebook population. These are examples of how their data is biased to start with and that matters when attempting to make these claims. The authors claim that people who rely on Facebook to get news and information about the coronavirus are less likely than the average American to be vaccinated. But this isn't valid without describing a representative sample of the American population, Facebook users, or measuring reliance instead of mere self-reported exposure over a short time window. What this data and methodology does suggest is that people who have not yet been vaccinated are less reachable by CNN, MSNBC, or the Biden Administration than on Facebook, making our ongoing efforts to share authoritative information and encourage vaccine uptake more important than ever."

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 8:15 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Re: Message from [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED] just checking at the end of the day. I'm sure you're swamped. Making sure we don't let too much time pass before getting back together with you and [REDACTED], and whomever else might make sense.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Monday, July 26, 2021 at 2:54 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Re: Message from [REDACTED]

—let me know if it makes sense to sync on next steps? Would love to move forward with the meetings we identified as next steps as soon as your team is ready.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Friday, July 23, 2021 at 11:20 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com> (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>, [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Message from [REDACTED]

Including this week's updated report here. Look forward to scheduling our next working session. As always please let us know if you have any questions.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Friday, July 23, 2021 at 7:29 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fb.com>, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Subject: Message from [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED] (if I may),

Thanks again for taking the time to meet earlier today. It was very helpful to take stock after the past week and hear directly from you and your team, and to establish our next steps.

We talked about the speed at which we are all having to iterate as the pandemic progresses. I wanted to make sure you saw the steps we took just this past week to adjust policies on what we are removing with respect to misinformation, as well as steps taken to further address the "disinfo dozen": we removed 17 additional Pages, Groups, and Instagram accounts tied to the disinfo dozen (so a total of 39 Profiles, Pages, Groups, and IG accounts deleted thus far, resulting in every member of the disinfo dozen having had at least one such entity removed). We are also continuing to make 4 other Pages and Profiles, which have not yet met their removal thresholds, more difficult to find on our platform. We also expanded the group of false claims that we remove, to keep up with recent trends of misinformation that we are seeing.

We hear your call for us to do more and, as I said on the call, we're committed to working toward our shared goal of helping America get on top of this pandemic. We will reach out directly to [REDACTED] to schedule the deeper dive on how to best measure Covid related content and how to proceed with respect to the question around data. We'd also like to begin a regular cadence of meetings with your team so that we can continue to update you on our progress. You have identified 4 specific recommendations for improvement and we want to make sure to keep you informed of our work on each.

I want to again stress how critical it is that we establish criteria for measuring what's happening on an industry-wide basis, not least to reflect the way platforms are used interchangeably by users themselves. We believe that we have provided more transparency, both through CrowdTangle (the flaws of which we discussed in some detail) and through our Top 100 report, than others and that any further analysis should include a comprehensive look at what's happening across all platforms—ours and others – if we are going to make progress in a consistent and sustained manner.

Finally, we will be sending you the latest version of our Top 100 report later today, per our regular schedule. [REDACTED] will do the honors this week as it will likely be completed at our end later today East Coast time. We really do hope that we can discuss our approach to this data set in greater detail during our next session with [REDACTED], as we genuinely believe it is an effective way of understanding what people are actually seeing on the platform.

Once again, I want to thank you for setting such a constructive tone at the beginning of the call. We too believe that we have a strong shared interest to work together, and that we will strive to do all we can to meet our shared goals.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11/3/2021 2:57:44 PM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com]; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Subject: RE: Our announcement

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your note. I really appreciate it.

Let me get back to you next week once we are done crashing on our rollout for vaccines 5-11.

All the best,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2021 9:42 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>; [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Re: Our announcement

Thanks [REDACTED]—we'd appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss concerns you have related to the recent press reports. We feel strongly that much of the reporting is based on documents that have been taken out of context and don't tell the full story of our work. Please let me know if you'd have time to connect next week.

Thanks—have a good weekend.
[REDACTED]

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2021 10:18 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Our announcement

Good afternoon, [REDACTED],

I hope this email finds you well. I'm back from my paternity leave stint and getting my sea legs in the office with a six week old at home.

Thank you for this note to [REDACTED]. I did want to say that we have seen the recent public reports around Facebook and misinformation. We are certainly concerned about what we are seeing, given our emphasis on health misinformation in our advisory and the ongoing conversations our teams have been having. As has been the case, you'll continue to see us raising the issue of health misinformation in public and private as a critical public health issue.

All the best,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] [fb.com](#)>
Date: October 28, 2021 at 6:31:51 PM EDT
To: [REDACTED] [hhs.gov](#)>
Cc: [REDACTED] [@fb.com](#)>
Subject: Our announcement

Dear [REDACTED]

I hope you are well. It's been a while since we connected. I know our teams have remained in close contact with respect to our work to provide authoritative information about the vaccine and we are working on how we can partner in this next push to vaccinate children. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with your team.

I also wanted to be in touch to update you on an announcement we made today. Mark announced that we will have a new company brand - Meta - which signals our commitment to build the next evolution of social technology - beyond what digital connection makes possible today. We believe the ultimate promise of technology is to improve people's lives. With the metaverse, we see the opportunity to bring people together in ways never before possible in the next decade. We are starting this conversation early so that we can make sure it's built on solid foundations when it comes to things like privacy, safety, and economic opportunity.

While we are looking to the future, our mission hasn't changed, and neither has the sense of responsibility that we have to the billions of people who use our apps and services every day. We're proud of our record navigating the complex tradeoffs involved in operating services at global scale, and of our massive investments in safety and security. We also continue to believe more regulation is necessary. We are on the cusp of a new era of technology but - in many countries - we still don't yet have rules in place for this one.

As we begin to work on the next evolution of technology and of our company, I wanted to let you know and make myself available to hear your thoughts, questions, and feedback. We know the metaverse can be hard to grasp - not unlike trying to describe the World Wide Web in the early 1990s - but we believe this technology will be an important part of our collective future, and it is something that we will all be building together.

I also recognize the intense debate that's been prompted by the documents that have been disclosed by a former employee. You and I have touched on the subject of wellbeing in our previous conversations and I know it's an area of concern for you and for the White House. I would welcome the opportunity to meet again to hear from you and to address the claims that have been made against the company.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 8/23/2021 10:43:44 AM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com]; [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH); [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]
CC: [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Subject: RE: Facebook Covid actions

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope this finds you well. Thank you so much for following up with this detailed note. We are grateful for you and your team's attention to the concerns we have been raising and the work to address those ongoing concerns.

[REDACTED] and I are also in touch, but we look forward to continuing to move forward together with urgency and solutions during these extraordinary times.

Best,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 3:08 PM
To: [REDACTED] (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]@hhs.gov>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Subject: Facebook Covid actions

Dear [REDACTED]

Many thanks again for the recent opportunity to discuss our Covid related work. You asked for an update on existing and new steps that Facebook is taking. As you know, Facebook takes its responsibility during this prolonged, unprecedented public health crisis extremely seriously. In light of our conversation we have been reviewing our efforts to combat COVID-19, and are eager to continue working towards our shared goal of helping more people get vaccinated and limiting the spread of harmful misinformation.

The White House described four recommendations to social media platforms in July, which cover access to authoritative information, enforcement and speed of enforcement, and transparency. Those are priorities we have shared throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In this update, we describe both our historic actions in these areas, as well as new information on boosting access to authoritative information, and further policy work to enable stronger action against persistent distributors of vaccine misinformation. Finally, as agreed at our last meeting, we remain eager to meet with you and/or your team about our ideas regarding data that could potentially be shared with the public.

Elevating access to better information

We continue to review, experiment and adapt to find better ways to increase access to quality information, as we have done since the start of the pandemic:

- We have heard your and others' concern that people should be better able to access authoritative information on our platform. We agree, and have already taken action to make it easier for people to find more authoritative and trusted information in News Feed. We would be happy to describe these efforts to you in a specific briefing.
- We continue to help people directly access accurate information through the COVID Information Center, and will keep adding to this as the situation evolves and especially as guidance for various populations is updated - including when children should get vaccinated, and when the already vaccinated should be getting boosters.
- So far we have connected over 2 billion people globally with resources about COVID, and in the US alone we've helped over 4 million people get vaccinated through our Vaccine Finder, which connects them with appointment information, directions, and contact information.

- We're continuing to refine how we help health partners reach communities with less access to information or lower vaccination rates, leveraging the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other resources to reach those populations with high-quality, authoritative information.

Limiting Potentially Harmful Information

We continue to improve and refine measures that reduce the spread of potentially harmful content and limit the distribution of actors who share misleading information about COVID and the vaccine:

- We will shortly be expanding our COVID policies to further reduce the spread of potentially harmful content on our platform. These changes will apply across Facebook and Instagram.
 - We are increasing the strength of our demotions for COVID and vaccine-related content that third party fact checkers rate as "Partly False" or "Missing Context." That content will now be demoted at the same strength that we demote any content on our platform rated "False."
 - We are making it easier to have Pages/Groups/Accounts demoted for sharing COVID and vaccine-related misinformation by also counting content removals under our COVID and vaccine-related Community Standards violations towards their demotion threshold.
 - Any entity linked to another entity that is removed for violating our COVID or vaccine misinformation policies will be rendered "non-recommendable" on our platform.
 - Lastly, we will also be strengthening our existing demotion penalties for websites that are repeatedly fact-checked for COVID and vaccine misinformation content shared on our platform. Together, we intend for these policies to further limit the traction that misinformation can get on our platform.
- To date, we've removed over 20 million pieces of content for COVID- and vaccine-related misinformation. We've also taken action against people who repeatedly post content that violates our policies. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have removed over 3,000 accounts, Pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID and vaccine misinformation.
- We've specifically investigated the people sometimes identified in the media as the 'Disinfo Dozen'. We've applied penalties to some of their website domains as well so any posts, including their website content, are moved lower in News Feed. The remaining accounts associated with these individuals are not posting content that breaks our rules, have only posted a small amount of violating content, which we've removed, or are simply inactive. In fact, these 12 people are responsible for about just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook. This includes all vaccine-related posts they've shared, whether true or false, as well as URLs associated with these people. In total we have removed three dozen Pages, groups and Facebook or Instagram accounts linked to these 12 people, including at least one linked to each of the 12 people, for violating our policies.
- We continue to notify people when content that they have interacted with is removed for violating our policies on COVID and vaccines.
- We have implemented and continue to experiment with signals that we can use -- around specific kinds of sharing behavior, specific page types, and specific types of language, among other factors -- to demote content that we predict will contain low quality information.

Increasing Transparency

We will continue to seek to ensure the actions we are taking (as well as misses) are apparent and discernible by people who don't work at Facebook. We are especially keen to discuss with you what form shared data could take in order to be most valuable to analysts and researchers, both inside and outside of government.

In terms of what we're doing now:

- We already have a wide amount of data available for analysis through our academic partnerships like FORT, but we are keenly aware that more kinds of data, or more specific cuts, may be valuable to the people actively looking to study this area more closely. We also share data with the public through our quarterly Community Standards Enforcement Report releases, [most recently this past Wednesday](#), and have also [just launched a Widely View Content Report](#) to further increase transparency with the public.
- We are currently deep in internal discussions to identify the best ways we can share with the public information about some of the most widely viewed content on Facebook. We're actively considering how we can best share that information so that it is valuable to the public and to researchers, which to the best of our knowledge no other company provides.
- We're also looking at ways we can produce more data and deeper data sets that can create richer opportunities for researchers to analyse the reach of various kinds of content.
- We have examined the distribution patterns of the so-called 'Disinfo Dozen' (as above - <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/taking-action-against-vaccine-misinformation-superspreaders/>).
- To advance public understanding of how social media and behavioral sciences can be leveraged to improve the health of communities around the world, we've supported researchers attempting to understand social media's

role in the ongoing pandemic. One report [has already been published](#), and we are pleased to see that social media can have positive impacts on public health needs. There are other researchers we are supporting, and look forward to reviewing their work as it is completed and peer reviewed.

- While separate from the issue of content online, researchers are also able to access our COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey, which is a global survey gathering insights about symptoms, testing, mask-wearing, social distancing, mental health, vaccine acceptance, reasons for vaccine hesitancy, and more. We believe this is the largest public health survey in history. Over 70 million responses from more than 200 countries and territories have been collected, and the data can be broken down by self-reported demographic information like gender and race as well as by hyper-local geographic regions. The data is available in near real-time and is collected off-platform by academic partners at the University of Maryland (UMD) and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Academic and nonprofit researchers are able request access to non-public, non-aggregated survey data for their research.

I hope this is a useful update, pending further work and discussions we will continue to update you and your teams and we are happy to meet and discuss any of the work we have outlined here. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my team with any further questions.

Best wishes,

