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**From:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Sent:** Monday, 14 September 2020 10:22 AM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>; < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Subject:** RE: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

I’m chatting to ,

I don’t think this is a legal issue. It’s a major reputational issue giving someone platform who at best is a Covid minimiser, at worst is a Covid denier. We will still be going through this pandemic when this goes to air.

Best,

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**From:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Sent:** Monday, 14 September 2020 10:14 AM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>; < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Subject:** RE: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Hi Rachel,

Just checking -are you saying the entire video should come down? If so I’ll ask them to do that. I’ll suggest to Great Southern that they need to do a full audit. Do we need to get a legal opinion on this internally also?

No doubt NZOA will also have a view on this. Should we jump on a call with them later today?

@ would be good to know your thoughts on best way forward.

Thanks

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**From:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Sent:** Monday, 14 September 2020 10:06 AM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>; < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Subject:** RE: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Hi both,

I think Great Southern need to be doing a full audit of the YouTube channel.

Removing this video is the minimum step, but there is still huge reputation risk to be giving platform to a doctor dabbling in Covid denial.

Have we shot the new season? Is it possible to have a discussion about finding another doctor?

Best,

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**From:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Sent:** Monday, 14 September 2020 9:59 AM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>; < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Subject:** RE: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Morena,

Chatted to Great Southern on Friday and again this morning.

Their current thinking is that they will have a chat with and ask to remove either the entire video or the last part of it which is the bit they’ve identified as most problematic, but they’re going to take another look and come back to me on exact next steps.

Apparently has also been in touch with great Southern directly so I suggested they don’t respond to him until we’ve had chance to align on what our response will be. @ it would be great if you could support Great Southern in their response.

They don’t think will have a problem with removing the content in the context and I’ve asked them to discuss with how she may proceed in the future when posting content of this nature.

I discussed with the team that whilst we don’t want to limit anyone’s free speech we do need to be mindful that our presenters have a  bigger platform and therefore a greater responsibility.

I’ll forward on more details once I have them.

Thanks

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**From:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Sent:** Friday, 11 September 2020 4:06 PM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Cc:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Subject:** FW: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Kia ora

Can you please have a look at complaint below, maybe chat with Great Southern and come back with a position – might run that statement by you .

I’ll then go back to NZ On Air.

Cheers

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**From:** < @nzonair.govt.nz>
**Sent:** Friday, 11 September 2020 2:24 PM
**To:** < @tvnz.co.nz>
**Cc:** < @nzonair.govt.nz>
**Subject:** FW: concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Kia ora ,

I hope your Friday is going well and it’s warmer in Akld than here! Brrrr!

Please see the below email we have received. Are you aware of this issue? is away today so I’m getting in touch to raise this.

We will likely respond that we are not involved in editorial oversight but that we have passed the information on to TVNZ, but will await your response before doing so.

Ngā mihi

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**From:** < .nz>
**Sent:** Friday, 11 September 2020 1:41 PM
**To:** NZOA Info <info@nzonair.govt.nz>
**Subject:** concern about oversight and content - "The Checkup" Public health

Please could you pass this to whomever is responsible for supervising this contract.

I note that you are funding a second series of ‘The Checkup’

*The Check Up 2,* 10 x 22 mins, Great Southern Television for TVNZ 1, up to $590,102. The doctors will return with another series delivering educational and informative public health stories.

I am deeply worried at this time that is involved in this project given recent output on COVID 19.

You will note that video on the COVID 19 PCR test has ten times the engagement of all other videos.  is clearly presenting self as a medical doctor and TV presenter offering health advice – a trusted source of information in these troubled and difficult times.

On playing the video you will note that uses memes to undermine the current public health messages and offers false views that the positive cases found are in fact just a side effect of false positives because of indiscriminate testing of well persons. That the PCR test is not something that should be used or relied upon for screening.  makes liberal use of inverted comma hand movements when is explaining things she views as not true or without merit.  argues medical staff are testing people inappropriately and that in August (prior to the new cases) all the testing centres previously closed reopened and this is when the sudden surge of cases are found.  There is clear inference (which links to multiple conspiracy theories) that these are false positives knowingly being gathered simply because of the overreaching testing.

In fact in reality the first identified case of the second outbreak was found when a person visited their GP with symptoms resulting in a swab being taken.  Every case in the current cluster has also been fully genomically linked which of course means the virus DNA has been analysed and found to link back to a known case (impossible with a false positive).

 also at 5.47 makes the false assertion that community changed rules mean  asymptomatic people in the community are now ‘being made’ to have COVID tests when in fact the only people for whom tests are mandatory is a tiny and very specific high risk group.

 then turns to vaccines and dismisses the possibility of a COVID 19 vaccine as the outbreak would be over before the vaccine would be ready and makes the false claim that COVID 19 is seasonal when the evidence of a global pandemic all around the world at the same time would indicate precisely the reverse.  then quotes a paper showing that the flu vaccine did not reduce mortality overall in the over 65 age group ignoring the numerous papers that show its efficacy (assuming a good fit between circulating virus and vaccine). conflates this papers findings on flu with the potential COVID 19 vaccine and offers these as the reasons is not going to take it.

I am deeply concerned that taken together Dr is misrepresenting the evidence for and about this pandemic and undermining the public health messages on which the safety of fellow citizens depend.  is doing this under the banner of ‘A new Zealand Family Doctor’. I would be further concerned if TVNZ gave a public platform for this sort of misinformation or offered a space for someone who holds these views to be taken more seriously than the evidence allows.  As a public broadcaster supporting content you have a unique responsibility.

Yours faithfully