**Presentation title**

Information behaviour and cognitive bias in older Victorians accessing online vaccine-related information

**Explain why your paper is relevant, important and of interest to GP22 participants**

Discussion with a GP regarding vaccine safety is one of the strongest predictors of vaccine uptake among patients. However, patients often seek information online prior to seeing their GP for advice. This paper explores how older Victorians’ vaccination decisions are influenced by information accessed online.

**Take home message**

* Cognitive bias is likely to play a significant role in how patients access and interpret online vaccine-related information
* Online environments designed to manipulate cognitive biases may influence patient vaccination decisions

**Background**

Online vaccine misinformation has been rife during the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccine misinformation accessed online is a particular issue in older Australians. Further, only 54 percent of adults over 65 years of age are up to date with both five-yearly pneumococcal and annual influenza vaccines. This may be explained by people’s ‘information behaviour’, i.e. how people access, use, synthesise and apply information. Information behaviour may in turn be affected by cognitive biases (i.e. unconscious errors in thinking causing a misinterpretation of information).

**Aim / Hypothesis**

This study aims to investigate: (1) the relationship between information behaviour and cognitive biases amongst Victorians over 65 when accessing online vaccine-related information; and (2) how this relationship influences vaccination decisions.

**Method**

Data collection will involve qualitative in-depth interviews with a maximum variation sample of Victorians over 65 years of age recruited via a Facebook advertisement and using purposive sampling. Data analysis will involve constant comparison, and open and axial coding to assess the relationships between a range of cognitive biases on the one hand, and information behaviours on the other. Data collection will continue until data saturation is reached.

**Results**

The findings of the study will highlight how cognitive bias interacts with information behaviour, and how this interaction impacts upon vaccine uptake for older Australians.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Many online environments are designed to manipulate cognitive bias to increase user screen-time. Findings should create an understanding of how this affects patient vaccination decisions, and therefore how GPs should communicate vaccine-related information.