

## Going viral: The best COVID-19 news of the past week

16 hours ago | Rachel Williamson

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*Welcome to our wrap for investors of the key coronavirus news this week.*

### By the numbers

Australian deaths: 45, up 88 per cent on last week

Australian cases: 6,010, up 17 per cent

Global deaths: 82,172, up 59 per cent on last week

Global cases: 1,431,900, up 42 per cent on last week

The ASX All Ordinaries closed down 0.8 per cent on April 8 at 5,258.80 points.

The Dow Jones 30 futures, the best indicator for how the ASX will open on Thursday, was up 0.05 per cent at 4.55pm on April 8 to 22,503 points.

### What governments have been doing

This week we finally got a peak at the numbers federal and state governments have been basing their go-home-stay-home advice on.

Based on the early international figures from international sources, **it appears the advice has worked**: Australia has so far prevented a cataclysmic spike in ICU demand to 35,000, which would have overwhelmed the country's 7,000 bed capacity.

The next set of numbers to be run by the Doherty Institute, the organisation which was first to map the COVID-19 genome and which has been a key provider of information about the disease, will be based on the emerging local data and provide a state-by-state breakdown.

The next step, according to conservative commentators, is the exit strategy.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is still priming Australians for lengthy restrictions on freedoms, but has effectively said that loosening the knots was up to the states.

NSW is reportedly already looking at the end game as health officials and some government ministers consider long-term exit strategies for COVID-19 social-distancing restrictions.

The 'immunity passports' concept being floated in Europe and the US to free people with COVID-19 immunity has not yet popped up here, but there are plenty of companies betting it will.

But while governments are working hard to protect Australians from one disease, there's another that no one can save us from: stupidity.

A bizarre conspiracy linking 5G and coronavirus has taken hold which suggests the rollout of faster 5G internet is either causing or accelerating the spread of the coronavirus.

The result? People are setting fire to 5G masts, further reducing your ability to stream low-quality Netflix movies to pass the endless days at home.

## What investors are saying

The last two weeks have led a cautious climb from rock bottom on March 23, but investor opinions range from boo-yah! to keep that stinking thing away from me.

Among the boo-yah! crowd are some "dangerous" millennials who have been fired by a little, although not enough, knowledge, says Dale Gillham, chief analyst of financial services company Wealth Within.

"Many are attempting to not just bottom pick stocks in this volatile period but attempt to bottom pick the wrong types of stocks, attempting to make a fortune. It is highly likely they will get caught out and this will cost them dearly," he said.

Their less impetuous comrades are battening down the hatches and preparing for an expected apocalypse. They'll certainly be hoping the real downturn is still to come as missing out on the last market plunge will hurt.

Tech investor Alex Waislitz believes — no surprises here — that tech will lead the recovery, outpacing its more staid and traditional peers. He even name dropped seven companies as possible leaders, although buyer beware — he does own stakes in all of them.

Another fund manager talking their own book was Naos Asset Management chief investment officer Sebastian Evans, but he also tried to outline where resilience in the market lay and the areas where equities demand would be once the recovery begins — not small caps, unfortunately.

## What companies have been up to

Anyone who has tried the two big supermarkets' home delivery for the first time during this crisis will know it's easier to put some pants on and just go to the supermarket than complete an order on their websites.

Which is likely why the few home delivery and home delivery-related stocks on the ASX are doing so well: a) no one can cook anymore and b) ugh, pants are too far away.

Among the companies trying to capitalise on COVID-19 testing was [TBG Diagnostics \(ASX:TDL\)](#).

Unfortunately, the company now numbers among those on the ASX's watchlist, after announcing a spectacular Europe deal for its Chinese subsidiary's testing kit only to say quietly three weeks later that [China has banned all exports of said kits and they don't have Chinese registration, meaning they can't sell it in Europe or China.](#)

[Fintechs are effectively telling shareholders to chill out, and so far it's working.](#)

Although wealth management and brokerage service [SelfWealth \(ASX:SWF\)](#) is the only one to have a clear advantage in this market, as trading volumes have surged since late February and the low-cost broker is capitalising: it's seen hefty quarter-on-quarter growth in several metrics including active traders and operating revenue.

And [Skin Elements \(ASX:SKN\)](#) claims it has moved into hand sanitiser – only revealed in full after three letters from the ASX – and it [is not a cash grab](#), as it did a deal with [Holista CollTech \(ASX:HCT\)](#), itself better known for dietary supplements, to merge their two sanitisers into one mega sanitiser.