

How does it feel for me during COVID-19?

Week Commencing 7th December 2020

Public Voices: Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccination in Leeds

On 20th November, we launched our survey to learn more about how people in Leeds felt about getting their COVID-19 vaccine. Since then, we've received over 3000 responses.

In [the last Weekly Check In](#), we reported on some of the broader trends we spotted in the data. This time, we want to take a closer look at a couple of those trends.

The survey is still open to all and can be found here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/covid19vax>

We're extremely grateful to all our partners across the city for spreading the word about this survey. Please share it far and wide so that we can capture as many voices as possible! Thank you!

Headline 1: People aged 44 and younger were more likely than older generations to say that they don't plan to get the vaccine or were undecided. Vaccine hesitancy peaks among the 25-34-year age category.

About our respondents:

- 75% of respondents under 45 were women (compared with 63% of respondents aged 45+)
- 83% were from a White British background (compared with 93% of over-45s)
- 10% were clinically extremely vulnerable (compared with 18% of over-45s)
- 79% reported no disability or health condition (compared with 68% of over-45s)
- 24% had a child under the age of 5 (compared with 1% of over-45s)
- 8% were unpaid carers (compared with 14% of over-45s)
- 20% were health and care workers (compared with 10% of over-45s).

Under-45s were more likely than over-45s to say protecting others from the virus motivates them to get vaccine. 60% of under-45s who told us they plan to get vaccinated stated this as a reason, compared with 40% of over-45s.

Under-45s were more likely than their older counterparts to say they won't keep following social distancing guidance once they have been vaccinated or that they were unsure whether they would. 2% of under-45s said they wouldn't stick to guidelines, compared with less than 1% of those aged 45+; and 7% of under-45s said they were unsure, compared with 2% of those aged 45+.

Headline 2: On the whole, people from White British backgrounds were more likely than people from other ethnic backgrounds to say they plan to get the vaccine.

Levels of indecision are also higher among people from other ethnic backgrounds.

About our respondents:

- 55% of our respondents from culturally diverse backgrounds were aged under 45, compared with 24% of White British respondents
- 19% were clinically extremely vulnerable, compared with 15% of White British respondents.
- Respondents from culturally diverse backgrounds were slightly more likely than their White British counterparts to be a health and care worker (16% vs 12%)
- Respondents were similarly likely to have a child under 5 or be an unpaid carer whatever their ethnic background.

Overall, our culturally diverse respondents tended to be younger than their White British counterparts, and younger people on the whole are more likely to be hesitant about vaccines. However, even when compared to White British people of the same age, our culturally diverse respondents are more likely to be reluctant to get vaccinated:

Correlation between ethnicity and intention to get the COVID-19 vaccine among people aged under 45			
Ethnicity	Plan to get the vaccine	Don't plan to get the vaccine	Unsure whether to get the vaccine
White British	74%	9%	17%
All other ethnicities	61%	15%	24%
Other ethnicities excl. White Irish and European	59%	17%	23%

Although respondents from culturally diverse backgrounds were more likely than their White British counterparts to state they were clinically extremely vulnerable, they were less likely to state that their age or health condition motivated them to get the vaccine. 18% of culturally diverse respondents say this is a motivator for getting the vaccine, compared with 25% of White British respondents.

For respondents of all ethnicities, protecting oneself and / or others were the most frequently cited reasons for getting the vaccine. However, compared to their White British counterparts, a larger proportion of respondents from other ethnic backgrounds cited protecting themselves and/or others as a reason to get vaccinated:

Ethnicity	% which cites protecting self	% which cites protecting others
White British	39%	39%
All other ethnicities	40%	43%
All other ethnicities excluding White Irish and European	53%	47%

37% of people from culturally diverse backgrounds stated they would like to get vaccinated at their GP surgery, compared with just 25% of White British people.

While concerns about side effects were the most frequently referenced reason for not getting vaccinated across all ethnicities, they were particularly prevalent among culturally diverse communities.

34% of all culturally diverse respondents refer to worries around potential side effects, a figure that rises to 41% when White Irish or European respondents are excluded. The equivalent figure for White British respondents is 25%.

When asked what information they would like about the vaccine, the most popular response among all respondents related to side effects. However, culturally diverse respondents were more likely than White British respondents to say they want information about the vaccine's components. 8% of culturally diverse respondents want this information (a figure that rises to 9% when White Irish and European people are excluded). Only 2% of White British people say they want to know about vaccines' ingredients.

What do respondents want to know about the vaccine?

Between 20th November and 9th December, 2014 respondents told us whether there was anything they would like to know about the vaccine.

44% told us that there wasn't.

Second most commonly, people told us that they would like information about potential side effects, both long-term and short-term. 17% would like this information, with some specifying that they would tolerate the risk of minor, short-term adverse reactions if they were made aware of it. A further 7% would like general information about the vaccine's safety.

Other information which people would like to access includes:

- Information about how long the vaccine will be effective for and whether it would need to be readministered at regular intervals
- Information about effectiveness
- Information about which vaccine they are getting (and why)
- Information about when they are due to get their vaccinations

What are communities telling us about getting the vaccine?

As well as running an online survey, we wanted to make sure we capture the voices of people in Leeds with the greatest health inequalities so that these can be fed into decisions and communications about the vaccine in Leeds. We have

reached out to some of our partners to ask them what they have heard about the COVID-19 vaccine among their communities.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to [Leeds Voices](#) and the [Communities of Interest team at Forum Central](#) for sharing this invaluable information.

If you'd like to feed in what you've heard from communities, please get in touch with us at info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk

What have Leeds Voices heard?

Leeds Voices have been connecting with people across the city to find out their thoughts about the COVID-19 vaccine.

The need for **reliable, detailed and specific information** came up in almost all of Leeds Voices' conversations in one form or another. What follows is a snapshot of their findings from their focus groups.

<p style="text-align: center;">Leep 1 A safe space for adults with learning disabilities</p> <p>One participant said they were not sure whether they would get the vaccine, with their reason being that it hadn't been tested enough.</p> <p>Other than this, all participants said they would definitely take the vaccine if they were offered it as they were desperate for life to get back to normal and to see friends and family members again. One participant said, "I just want this virus to go and never come back", with others saying they "want to have their life back", and "hadn't seen their family for months".</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Circles of Women Support</p> <p>4 people said they plan to get the vaccine; 2 people said they don't; 4 were unsure.</p> <p>Some women expressed ideas that confidence will increase with news about more and more safe uptake of vaccine.</p> <p>People were unsure because the vaccine is so new.</p> <p>The group would like detailed information about the vaccine to reassure people that it is safe.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Mawfa Theatre A community theatre organisation working with refugees and asylum seekers in Leeds</p> <p>2 people say they plan to get the vaccine; 1 person said they wouldn't; 5 were unsure.</p> <p>Participants who say they plan to get the vaccine commented that we all need to take responsibility, but also</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Leeds Refugee Forum A refugee-led organisation that aims to support refugees, asylum seekers and community organisations to settle in Leeds</p> <p>7 people said they plan to get the vaccine; 2 said they don't; 4 were unsure.</p> <p>People who said they would have the vaccine had had good experience with</p>

that scientists are responsible, clever people. One person had read that the vaccine is very successful in older groups, so there was no reason why they shouldn't get it as a younger person. They remarked, "I think it would be beneficial, fingers crossed". However, another participant responded "I put yes [to the question about planning to get the vaccine], but it would leave me a bit nervous. Nobody has had it for a year or longer, [I] need messages that around 2 years time I won't have long Covid symptoms. Some unease about it."

Those who were unsure said it was a matter of trust, because it's a completely new vaccine, not like the flu jab or tetanus which you get through your childhood or through travelling. For example, "If you want to use a new cosmetic, you want to know how it will work."

They need reassurance and an explanation of the science, as well as reassurance around side effects.

the flu jab and were confident with the process.

However, as there is more than one vaccine people were not sure whether they could trust that it would be safe. Some would want an independent research centre to say the vaccine worked, not the NHS.

One member had heard from their community that the vaccine contained an ingredient they can't consume for cultural reasons.

Information is needed and appreciated. One example of good practice was an African community radio station which had interviewed a doctor about the vaccine and the time it would take to work.

The group recommends that well-informed workers are deployed around the city to feed more information to those who are undecided. The town centre could have a small hub where people can get information.

Trusted community members should also be used to relay information to people.

There also needs to be clear information about what is in the vaccine.

What has the Communities of Interest network heard?

Our partners at Forum Central have been connecting with their Communities of Interest colleagues to find out what they have heard among their service users and members.

The vaccine was also discussed at a recent network meeting, where there was general agreement that community organisations would be willing to pass on information to their service users - but they need reliable information to be able to do this. The same point was made at the previous meeting in November. Third-sector organisations are having to decide what role they play in supporting vaccine roll-out at a time when some of their own staff don't feel informed enough to make a choice about being vaccinated themselves. As a result, they are having to have some "difficult conversations" with service users.

Here are a few of the points different communities have raised:

- There are particular issues with culturally diverse communities having been consulted about topics not related to the vaccine, but never having had the responses they asked for from key organisations. Because communication hasn't been felt to be two-way, there has been a significant break-down in trust for some, and this in turn makes those people less likely to plan to get vaccinated. - **BME Hub**
- Carers Leeds have noted anxiety around the vaccine among their service users. They are concerned about how it interacts with other health conditions and whether carers will be included in the first wave of vaccinations. They are interested in any information that could be shared both with staff and the wider public. "It's hard to relieve anxiety without knowing [the facts]". Family carers have concerns and questions around the vaccine:
 - "Is it safe for people with existing medical conditions?"
 - Are others having the vaccine such as the people administering it or other staff?
 - Is it safe for people to come out of shielding and re-engage with normal life?" **Carers Leeds**
- Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People sometimes feels that it is on the backfoot when it is trying to help people understand information about the vaccine, because service users have different levels of understanding depending on which media they have consumed. There needs to be an explanation around safety - people need to be reassured. **Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People**
- If appropriate, then faith buildings should be used to roll out the vaccine. This would offer some real reassurance to people because the buildings are familiar and offer a more comfortable space compared with a GP practice. It would also help to involve faith leaders. **Faiths Forum**
- There is a lack of trust and information around vaccinations among Gypsy and Traveller communities. **Leeds GATE**
- There are questions around which wave women will fall into depending on their personal circumstances. Women's Lives Leeds would also like to know how the recruitment process for people delivering the vaccinations will be led. **Women's Lives Leeds**
- "We want to support our members and their families to make an informed choice about if they are going to have or not have the vaccine. Do you know if there is any literature we can use to give to our members? Ideally we would have it in easy read and in several languages. Ideally we would start this work now and feed the information down over a period of weeks and running up to delivery of the vaccine. Through casual conversations we know many of our families in Halo and our services are fearful of the vaccine and worry about being able to trust it, parents and carers

decisions will impact our Halo members decisions greatly and I fear they will not make an informed decision based on facts but on hearsay from others.” Hamara

Feedback from a discussion led by Leeds Biomedical Research Centre focused on COVID vaccine research. Participants were asked what communities are experiencing and how we can break down barriers to access.

- What does a vaccine trial look like?
- “Not knowing would be a barrier”
- Scepticism and conspiracy theories are being heard, but uptake is really positive when people trust the venue and the location where vaccines are being delivered
- Flexibility is key

These reports are designed to support decision makers during this time. If you find them useful, we would love to hear from you! Please do drop us a line at info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk to tell us what you have found most useful.