

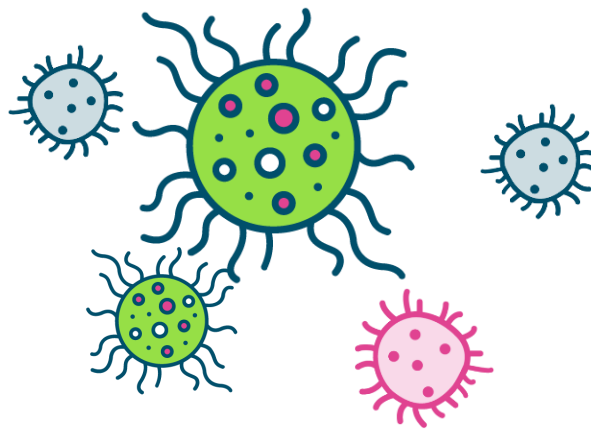
healthwatch

County Durham

COVID-19 Vaccine Programme

Research into the views of people in County Durham

February 2021





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Healthwatch County Durham

Healthwatch County Durham is the county's consumer champion for health and social care, representing the voices of current and future users to decision makers.



We listen

We listen to patients of health services and users of social care services, along with their family members or carers, to find out what they think of the services they receive.



We advise

We advise people how to get the best health and social care for themselves and their family. We provide help and information about all aspects of health and social care provided in County Durham.



We speak up

We make sure that consumers views are heard by those who provide health and social care. Wherever possible we try to work in partnership with providers to influence how they make improvements.

Executive summary

In response to COVID-19, the NHS has launched one of the largest public vaccination programmes ever. To help local services and national policymakers understand how they can improve the vaccination programme, Healthwatch County Durham circulated and promoted a survey, developed by Healthwatch England in February 2021.

The survey questions aimed to help gauge public attitudes to, and experience of, the vaccination programme.

Survey results

The NHS is doing everything it can to deliver COVID-19 vaccines, but there might be things that could be improved. We wanted to know:

- ☼ What people in County Durham think about the vaccine programme
- ☼ Whether they would be willing to have the vaccine if they had not already and if they have already had the vaccine
- ☼ What they thought about information on the vaccination programme

We are using the results to help local services better target communities and improve their vaccine service.

We received 260 responses to our survey, which were received all from the on-line survey. 206 (79%) of the people completing the survey were female and 51 (20%) were male with 2 people preferring not to say. 249 people completing the survey were “white British”, 5 people were “any other white” while 2 people preferred not to say.

Observations and Recommendations

From the information provided in our survey we have made the following observations:

- ☼ A high percentage of people who completed the survey are very positive about vaccines in general and in particular about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. There was praise for the staff, volunteers and the organisation of the vaccination programme
- ☼ This positive view could be because of the positive adverts/messages promoted by the NHS nationally and locally or could be because people wish to protect friends and family as 86% of those completing the survey said this was their main reason?

- ☼ Being able to access appropriate transport to vaccination centres was one of the major concerns raised and we are aware that NHS County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group has arranged transport for some vulnerable people to vaccination sites which is very positive
- ☼ There were a small number of negative comments about the order in which people were called for the vaccination and some concerns about carers not being able to get the vaccination sooner
- ☼ Because all the survey responses we received were from white British or other white ethnicity we are unable to reach any conclusions about the attitudes or views of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities to the vaccination programme
- ☼ 8 people said they thought the government should do more about misinformation and scaremongering

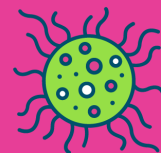
**Over 50%
would
definitely get
vaccinated**



**260 people
shared their
views**



**Over 86% said that
the main reason to
get the vaccine was
to protect their
friends and family
from getting
COVID-19**



**People who
completed the
survey were aged
from under 18
years to 75+**

**“The organisation has
been incredible to deliver
the vaccine, there is
nothing to fear on
receiving the vaccine”**



Background to our work



The Government's COVID-19 vaccines delivery plan aims to vaccinate tens of millions of people. We promoted this survey to support feedback of rapid insight to Government and local services about how the vaccine programme is working. The survey helped us to gather information about people's attitudes to COVID-19 vaccines and communications. The questions were

based on those the Department of Health and Social Care are using to gauge take-up of and attitudes to the vaccine.

We've focused the questions on attitudes to and communications about COVID-19 vaccinations for two reasons:

- ☼ Only a small percentage of the population had received the vaccine at the point at which we promoted the survey and, due to targeted age demographics, those that have received it would have been less likely to access an online survey
- ☼ Surveying attitudes and communications allowed us to see who may be sceptical of the vaccination programme and how communications can be delivered with their concerns in mind. For this reason, it was really important to record the demographics of respondents as fully as possible

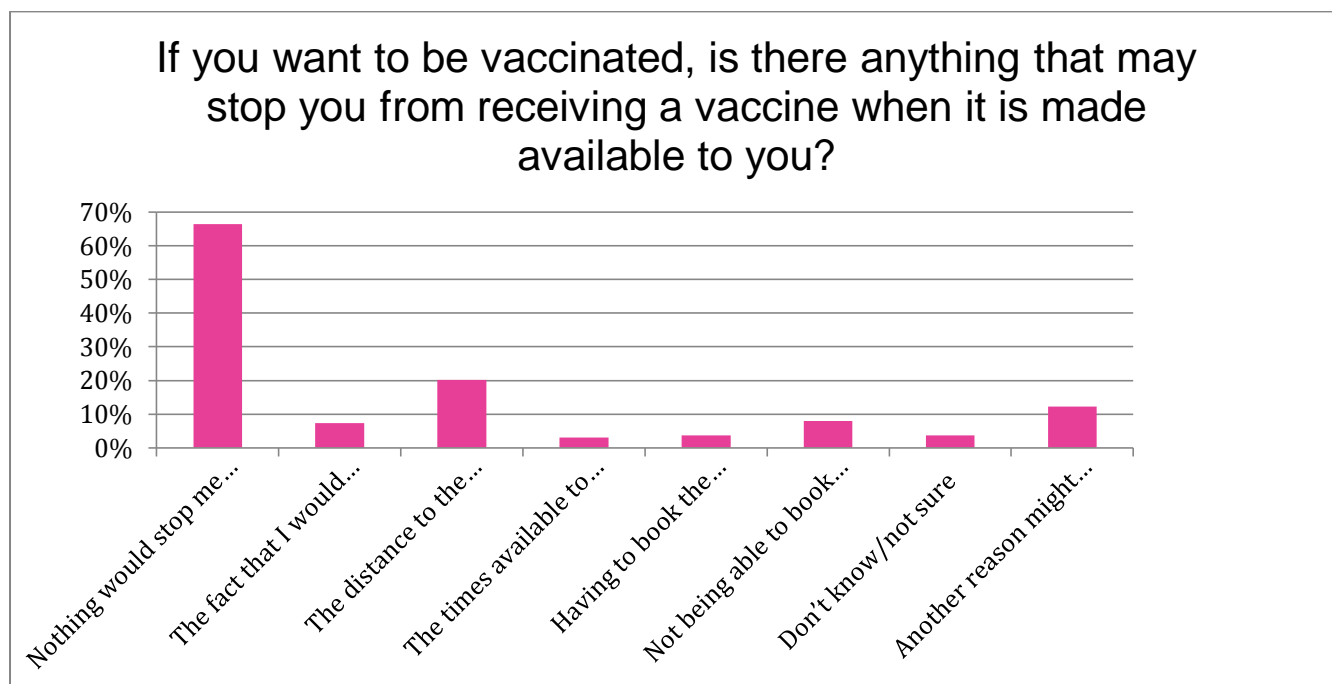
What we did and what we found



To collect people's views on the COVID-19 vaccine we used social media, published our survey on line via our e bulletin. Due to the current COVID restrictions there was no face to face engagement. The survey was developed by Healthwatch England for each local Healthwatch to use the questions to gather information locally about people's attitudes to COVID-19 vaccines and communications.

Of the 260 that completed the survey 204 people were very positive in general about vaccinations with 40 people being fairly positive. 110 people who had completed this survey had already received their COVID-19 vaccine, however a further 134 confirmed that they definitely would have the vaccine when offered it. Only 10 people told us they would probably not/definitely not/not sure about having the vaccine when offered.

66.5% of people completing the survey told us nothing would prevent them from getting the COVID-19 vaccination, however 20% said that having to get a taxi or public transport to the vaccination site might stop them from getting it.

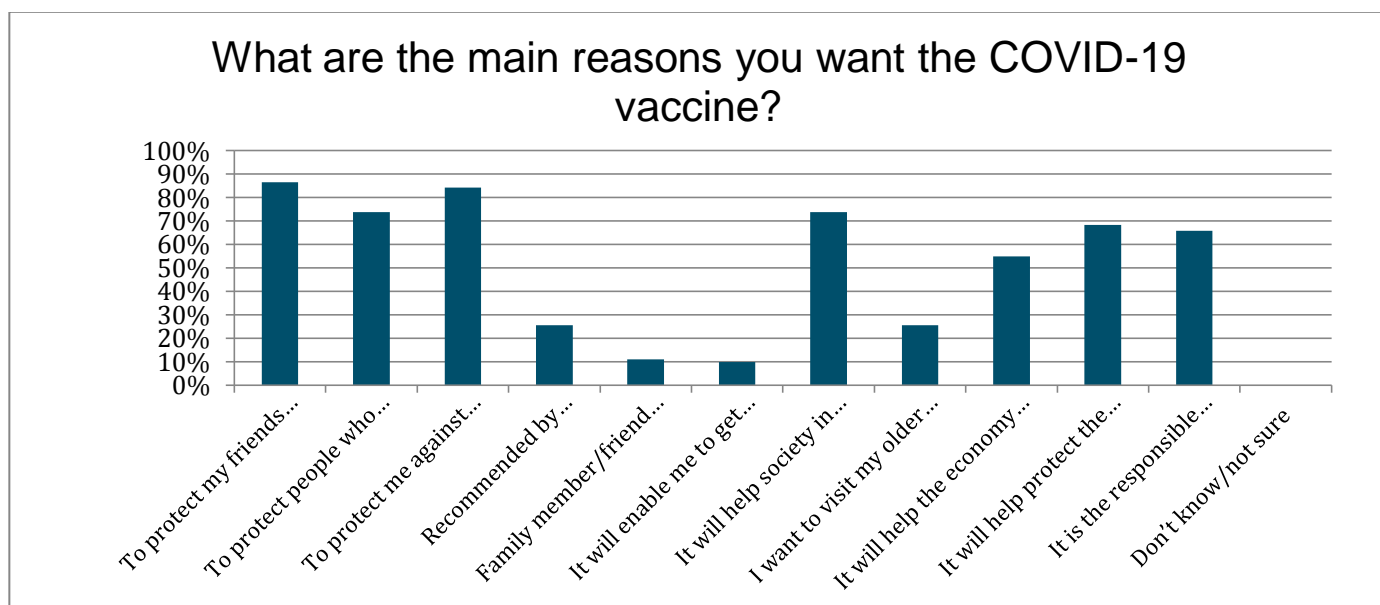


Where people indicated “Other reason” this is a summary of their views:

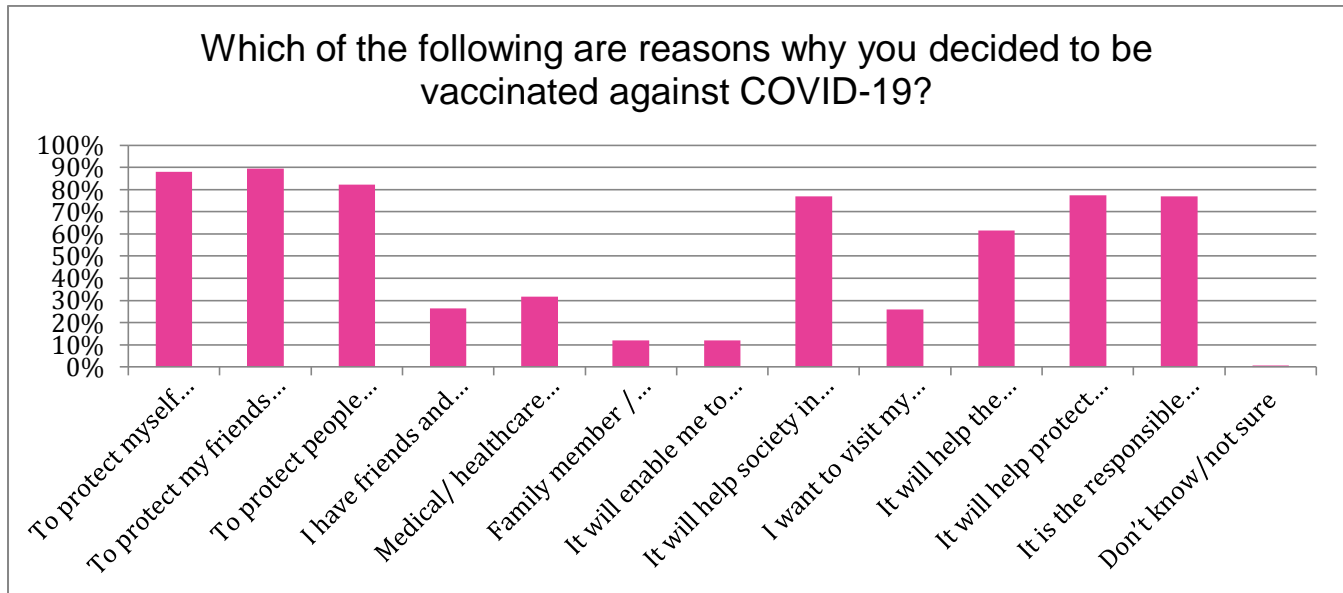
- ☼ Being extremely clinically vulnerable
- ☼ I think it's been made too quickly with little research into side effects
- ☼ I would be discouraged from getting the vaccine if it seemed as if the vaccination centre was not Covid-secure (e.g. distancing being observed, thorough cleaning of chairs, touch points etc)
- ☼ Being missed off a vaccination list and therefore not called for a vaccine appointment
- ☼ Concern about reports that UK is greedily buying up the vaccines at the expense of other poorer countries who desperately need it
- ☼ Being unwell and unable to have it
- ☼ weather disruption
- ☼ If statistics showed that the vaccine caused problems with some people with underlying health conditions
- ☼ I'm pregnant
- ☼ not being able to have it at my GP surgery where I have no doubt about competence of staff
- ☼ If the time available was when I don't have childcare I would struggle to attend the vaccine appointment

- ☼ Having to stand in a queue for a period of time would be difficult for me
- ☼ The way this question is formed. It is not necessary or helpful to say offered free of charge. It is not actually free all working adults contribute to the NHS most of their working lives
- ☼ If my husband was off work to take me
- ☼ Don't need it-age fitness not required

The graph below shows the main reasons why people wanted the COVID-19 vaccine.



For those who have been vaccinated, below are the reasons why they decided to go ahead.

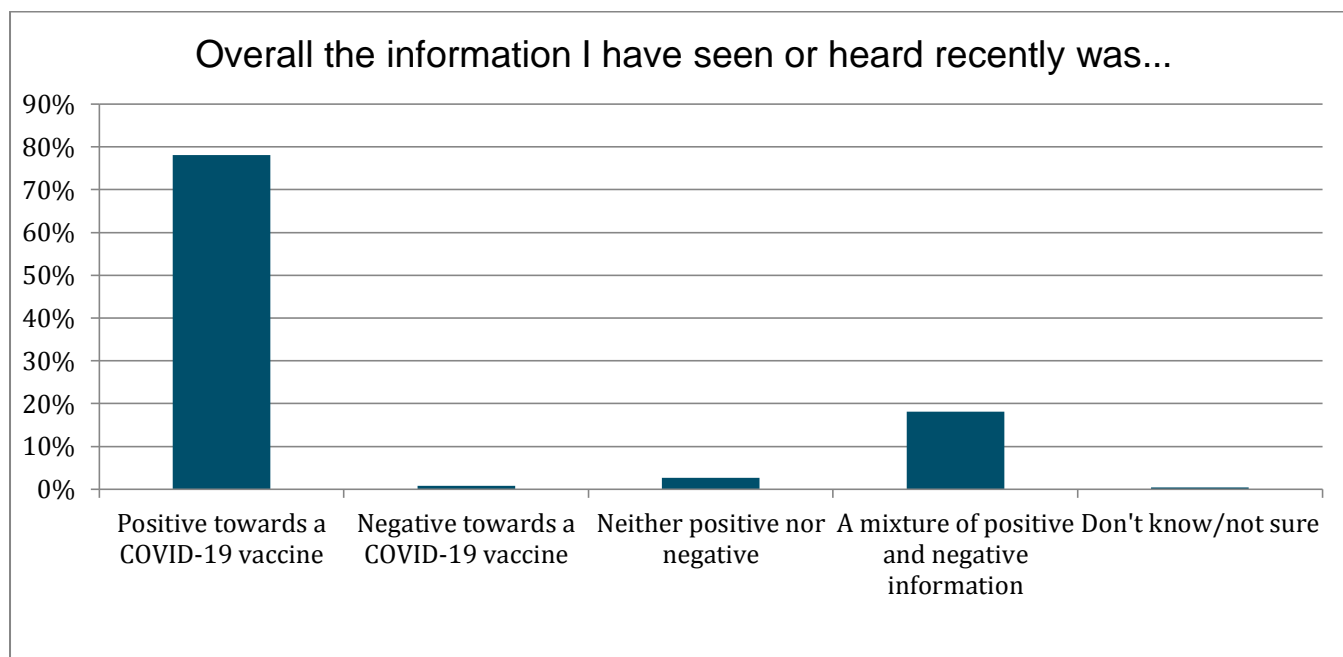


260 people answered the question around where they have mainly seen or heard information about the COVID-19 vaccine, with the most common themes being:

- 🌀 An NHS or government website (63%)
- 🌀 TV/Radio (73%)
- 🌀 Newspaper/online news websites (54%)
- 🌀 Government press conference (46%)
- 🌀 Social media (39%)

We asked all respondents what they thought about the information that they have heard or seen, 203 people (78%) thought it was positive.

Mixed messages in relation to what people thought about the information from the NHS or the Government about the vaccine and its roll out and how it had been communicated.



What else did people think was important?

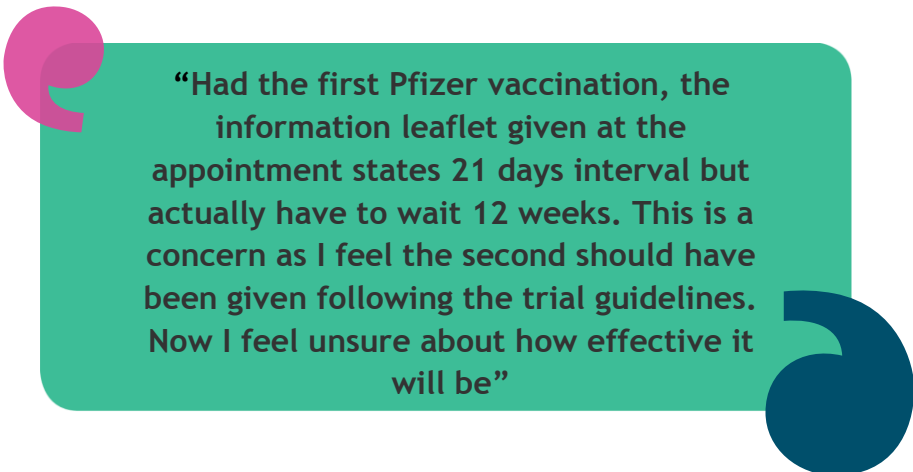
In total we received 260 completed surveys. At the end of the survey people were able to tell us anything else about the vaccination programme that they thought was important.

82 out of 260 people added information. There were a mixture of positive and negative comments about the vaccination programme.

The key themes from their views are listed below:

- ☼ 15 People were really pleased with the way the vaccination programme was going in general, some already having been vaccinated and others still waiting
- ☼ 2 people mentioned they were pleased with the information they had received about the vaccines, this included the government, local authority and their GP surgery
- ☼ 10 people commented about how well they thought programme was organised, including the great work of the staff and volunteers
- ☼ 5 people talked about waiting to be contacted, some being confused between making the appointments themselves or waiting to be contacted by their GP, with one person thinking the vaccination centres should be open 24/7
- ☼ 8 people mentioned waiting for their second vaccination and of this 6 people thought the time between appointments should be less than 12 weeks

- ☼ There were a number of concerns about the cohorts and order in which people were selected to be vaccinated. 4 people felt there should have been more clarity or inclusion for people with underlying health conditions and 5 people specifically mentioned carers and their opportunity to be vaccinated sooner. Only one person mentioned that they thought they should have had a choice about which vaccine to have
- ☼ There were a lot of comments about the information available about vaccination. 8 people thought the NHS/government should do more about scaremongering and misinformation or that the news and social media should be more responsible. One person felt more should be done to encourage people from BAME communities to have the vaccination
- ☼ 5 people felt they should have been given more information about the side-effects of the vaccines and what to expect after you have been vaccinated
- ☼ 4 people were concerned about being offered the vaccination at centres that were too far away



“Had the first Pfizer vaccination, the information leaflet given at the appointment states 21 days interval but actually have to wait 12 weeks. This is a concern as I feel the second should have been given following the trial guidelines. Now I feel unsure about how effective it will be”

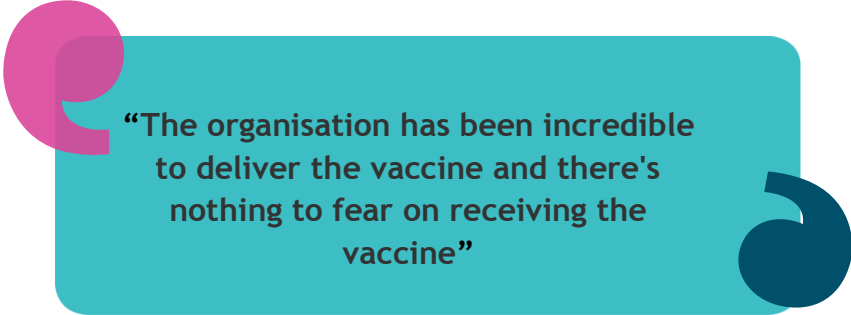
We asked people to provide us with the first half of their postcode to enable us to identify which localities were represented. The main postcode areas are DH1, DH7, DL5, DH8, TS21 and DL17.

Of the 260 people who completed our survey 259 provided us with their ages which ranged from under 18 to 75+. In addition 206 of respondents identified as females and 51 as males with 3 preferring not to say. 249 confirmed they were white British, 5 as any other white and 6 preferred not to say.

Conclusions

In conclusion we found the majority of people were happy with the rollout of the vaccine programme and the information that they had received, there was praise for the staff and the organisation of the programme.

Although there were some negative comments around the order in which people should receive their vaccines and concerns raised about carers not being able to have the vaccination sooner. Some people also mentioned they thought more should have been done to counteract misinformation and scaremongering



“The organisation has been incredible to deliver the vaccine and there's nothing to fear on receiving the vaccine”

Thank You

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey and shared their views. We would also like to thank all the organisations that shared our survey and helped us gather views from the public.

Appendices

1 Copy of questionnaire

Let us know what you think about the COVID-19 vaccine

Please spare a few moments to tell us what you think about the COVID-19 vaccine. The NHS is doing everything it can to deliver COVID-19 vaccines in [insert location], but there might be things that can be improved.

We want to know:

- What you think about the vaccine programme
- Whether you would be willing to have the vaccine if you have not already and if you have already had the vaccine,
- What you think about information on the vaccination programme.

Your feedback is confidential but can help services spot issues affecting care for you and your loved ones.

What you think about getting the vaccine

Q1. Thinking of vaccinations in general, such as those given for flu, polio or tetanus is your view of vaccinations... (tick one box)

- Very positive
- Fairly positive
- Neither positive or negative
- Fairly negative
- Very negative
- Not sure

Q2. If you were offered a vaccine against COVID-19 (Coronavirus), and at no charge through the NHS, how likely would you be to get vaccinated? (tick one box)

- I have already received the vaccine
- Definitely would
- Probably would
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Not sure

IF 'HAVE ALREADY', SKIP TO Q6

If 'Definitely would', 'Probably would', or 'Not sure' question logic to question 3 and 4

If 'Probably not', 'Definitely not, or 'Not sure', question logic to question 5

Q3. If you want to be vaccinated, is there anything that may stop you from receiving a vaccine when it is made available to you? Please tick as many as apply

- Nothing would stop me from getting a COVID-19 vaccination
- The fact that I would have to get public transport or a taxi to the location of the vaccine appointment might stop me getting it
- The distance to the location where the vaccine appointment takes place might stop me from getting it
- The times available to have the vaccine appointment might stop me from getting it
- Having to book the vaccine appointment online might stop me getting it
- Not being able to book a vaccine appointment at my GP surgery might stop me getting it
- Don't know/not sure
- Another reason might prevent me from having the vaccine - please specify [free text box - reason]

Q4. What are the main reasons you want the COVID-19 vaccine? Please tick as many as apply (checkboxes)

- To protect my friends and family from getting COVID-19
- To protect people who are vulnerable/at higher risk of getting COVID-19
- To protect me against getting COVID-19
- Medical/healthcare professional e.g. GP, nurse, pharmacist, recommends it
- Family member/friend recommends it
- It will enable me to get back to work
- It will help society in general to get back to normal again
- I want to visit my older family members at home or in a care home and I need the vaccine to make sure it is safe for them
- It will help the economy get going again
- It will help protect the NHS
- It is the responsible thing to do
- Don't know/not sure
- Other - please specify [free text box - reason]

Q5. If you would not want to be vaccinated, what would be your motivation for refusing the vaccine? Please tick as many as apply (checkboxes)

- I can't be vaccinated for health reasons
- I'm against vaccines in general
- I don't think the vaccine will be safe
- I don't think the vaccine will be effective
- I don't trust the intentions behind the vaccine
- I don't think coronavirus poses enough of a risk to me
- I would want to wait until others have had it first
- My family / community are against it
- My faith/religion/belief systems say it is wrong for me to have the COVID-19 vaccine
- I am concerned about the ingredients used in it
- Don't know/not sure
- Other -please specify [free text box - reason]

Q6. Which of the following are reasons why you decided to be vaccinated against COVID-19? Please tick all that apply

- To protect myself against getting COVID-19
- To protect my friends and family from getting COVID-19
- To protect people who are vulnerable / at higher risk of getting coronavirus
- I have friends and family who have got ill or died from COVID-19 and I know how serious it is
- Medical/ healthcare professional e.g. GP, nurse, pharmacist, recommends it
- Family member / friend recommends it
- It will enable me to get back to work
- It will help society in general to get back to normal again
- I want to visit my older family members at home or in a care home and I need the vaccine to make sure it is safe for them
- It will help the economy get going again
- It will help protect the NHS
- It is the responsible thing to do
- Don't know/not sure
- Other - please specify [free text box - reason]

What do you think about information on the COVID-19 vaccine?

Q7. Where have you mainly seen or heard information about a COVID-19 vaccine recently?
Please select all that apply.

- An NHS or Government website (e.g. nhs.uk, GOV.UK)
- My local council website
- TV/Radio
- Newspaper/Online news websites
- Social Media
- Friends/relatives
- An NHS GP practice, pharmacy, clinic or hospital
- Letter, leaflet or poster by the NHS or Government
- Government press conference
- Community organisations/websites
- Healthwatch
- Other
- Can't recall

Q8. Overall, was the information that you have seen or heard recently ...
(tick one box only)

- Positive toward a COVID-19 vaccine
- Negative toward a COVID-19 vaccine
- Neither positive nor negative
- A mixture of positive and negative information
- Don't know/not sure

Q9. Do you agree that information from the NHS or the Government about the vaccine and its roll out has been communicated clearly and effectively? (tick one box only)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/not sure

Q10. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about COVID-19 vaccinations? [Free text box]

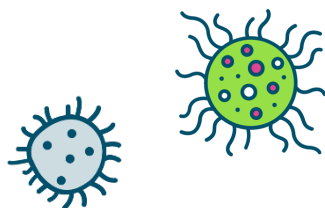


100
patients

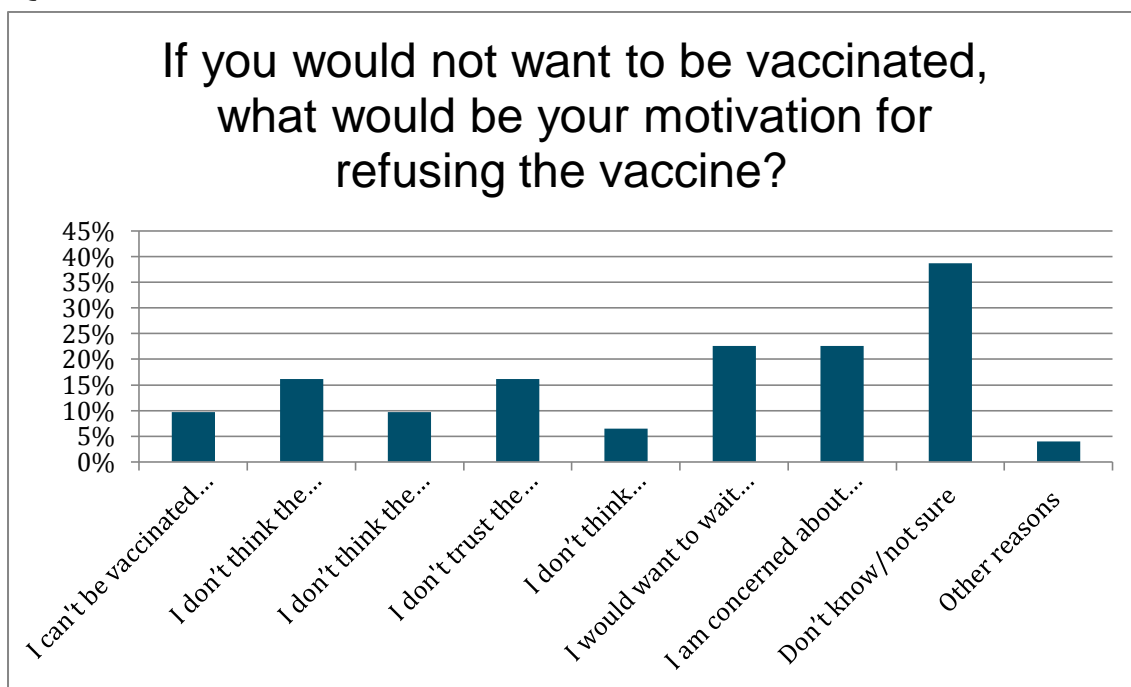
58
visitors

60
staff





Q5



Summary of other reasons stated:

- want it/would have it
- I don't want to take a vaccine for which the long-term effects have not been studied
- Not enough is known about the long term effects. Covid frightens me though.
- I am concerned about reports that the UK government is greedily buying up the vaccines leaving none for the poorer countries who also have many more vulnerable people in need of it, not giving a thought for them
- Testing not up to standard and maker's usage instructions not being followed

Q9

