

# CLOSING VACCINE GAPS: NATIONAL STUDY FINDINGS AND COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

**Maryland Philanthropy Network**

**June 3, 2021**



# VISION

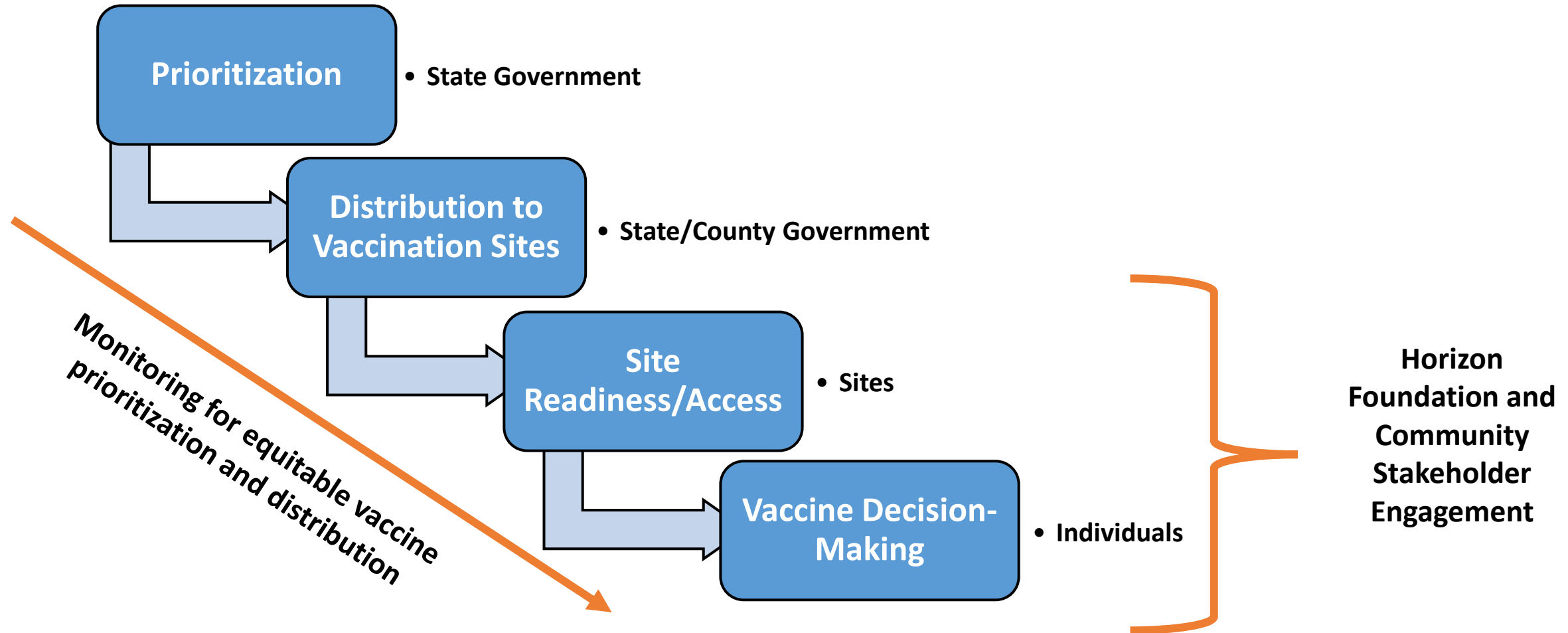
Our vision is for all people in Howard County to live long, healthy lives.



# MISSION

Our mission is to improve the health and wellness of people who live or work in Howard County.

# COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Flowchart



# State and Local Advocacy Efforts

<b>Site Readiness Community Access</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assistive Technology</li><li>• Language Accessibility</li><li>• Vaccination clinic planning for African American, Hispanic, and essential worker populations.</li><li>• Use of faith-based sites and community centers</li><li>• Mobile vaccination units (MICH)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vaccinations based on age, race, ethnicity</li><li>• Enhanced community access to target populations</li><li>• Prioritization, distribution and COVID-19 funding</li></ul>

# UNDERSTANDING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTING EQUITABLE AND INFORMED VACCINATION DECISION-MAKING

A PROJECT OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

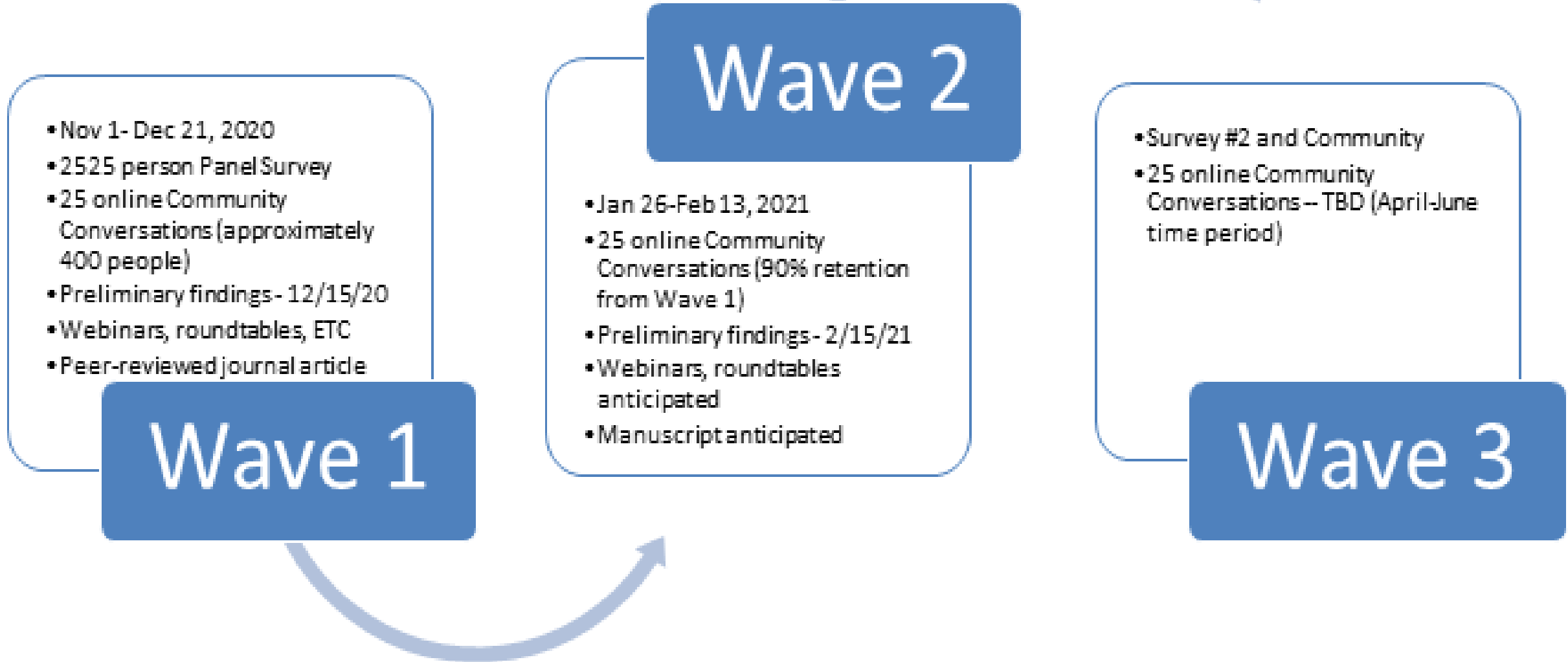
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# A Focus on Decision-Making

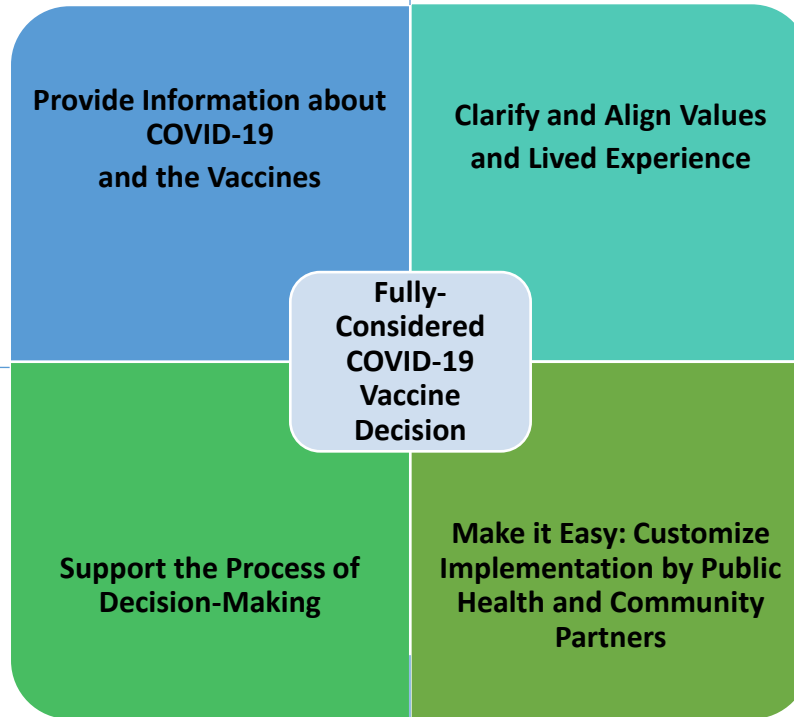
- **Focused on public health practice.** Designed to rapidly inform local and tribal health – on the ground and in communities.
- **Project Perspective:** This project is centered on what underpins decision-making in an effort to inform strategies that serve communities based on their experiences, perspectives, and needs. **The opportunities extend beyond messaging focused on promoting vaccination to include engagement and supporting decision-making.**
- **About the Key Findings and Opportunities:** The following findings represent a point in time in a rapidly changing environment. The opportunities identified are considerations for implementation, with full recognition that communities have different challenges and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Public health authorities are community health strategists and the opportunities outlined are intended to support or stimulate additional thinking about how to customize approaches for a given community.

# National Study Timeline



# Fully Considered COVID-19 Vaccine Decision

- Safety monitoring and long-term impacts
- Allergic reactions
- Up-to-date information on variants, as they are understood
- Speed of vaccine development
- Numbers still matter



- Provide data parsed by race, ethnicity, and underlying conditions
- Customize for the community (e.g., respect individual opinions, identify the right trusted messenger)
- Be transparent and acknowledge sensitivities regarding “jumping the line”

- Provide safe platforms to talk to experts and with each other
- Support positive public health behaviors and decisions, beyond vaccination

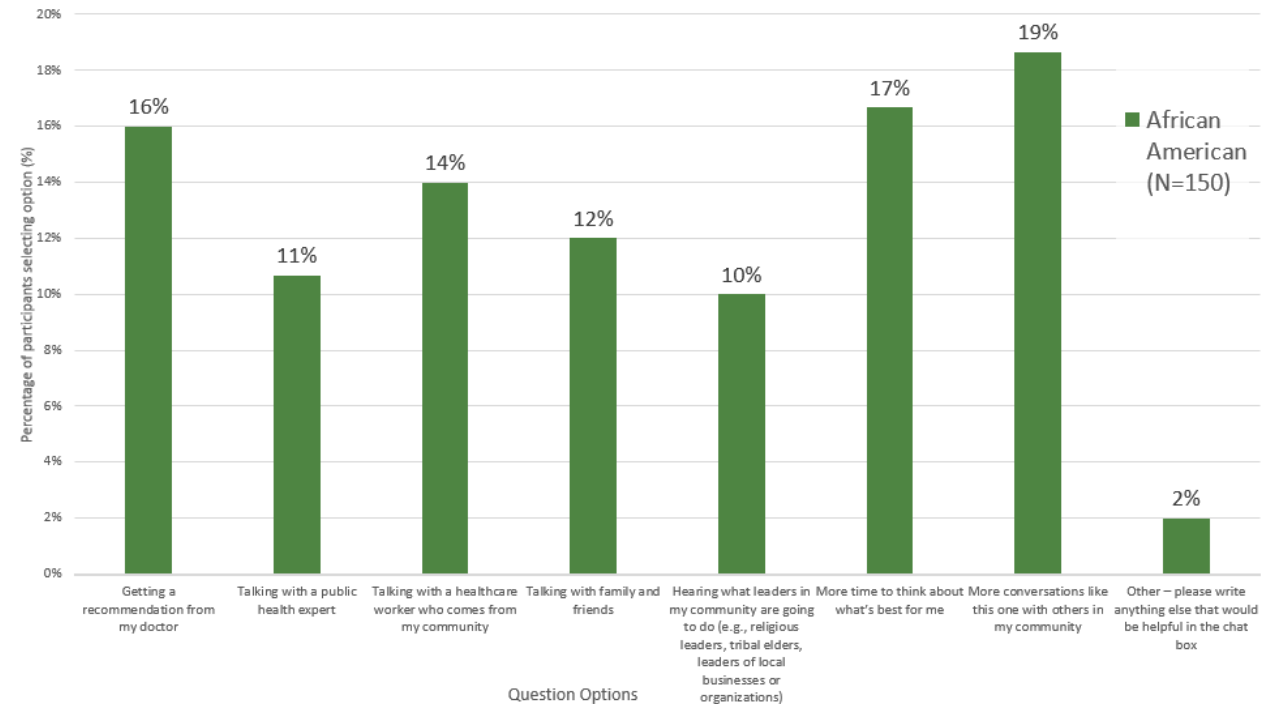
## Logistics, including:

- Account for lack of internet access
- Clear communication on eligibility
- Clinic location and other outreach efforts (e.g. door-to-door vaccinations)
- Culturally appropriate materials



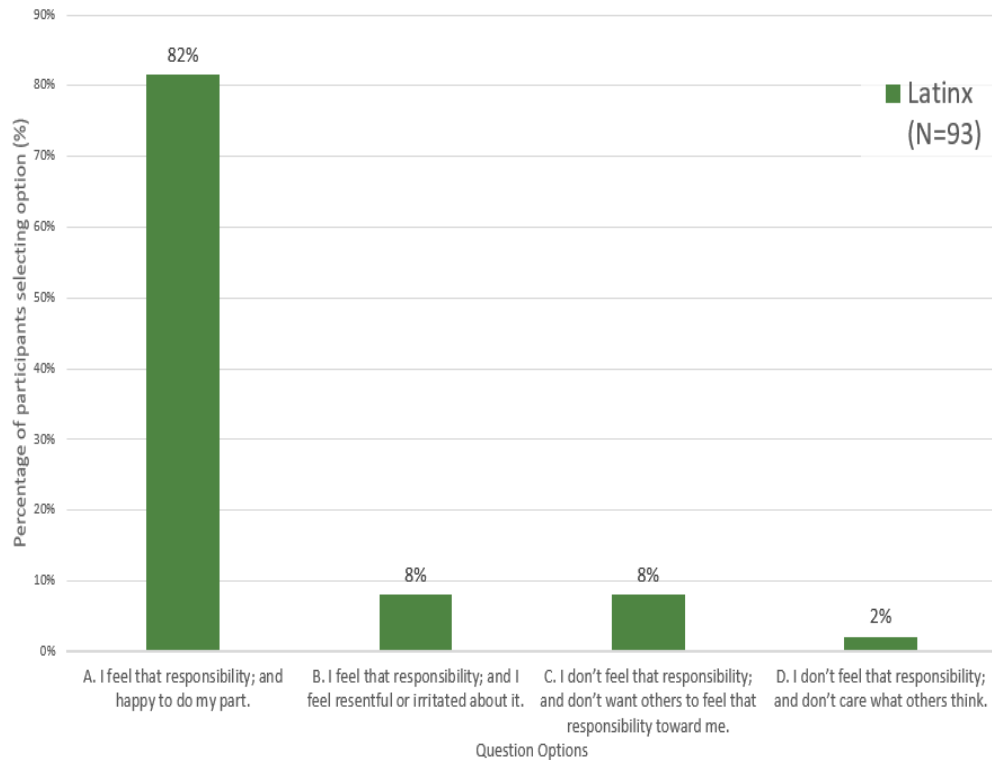
# COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS

- Evolving information needs: Need time to process information and chance to express concerns and skepticism, rather than more information; need relationship repair
- Values/Lived Experience: Historical trauma legacy and skepticism: “Why all this attention now?” Real discrepancies in treatment today “If I have a problem with vaccine, will anyone listen?” Political element: “I have to man up for public health, other groups have ‘right to choose’.”
- Support Decision-Making: More conversations/dialogue like this one; more time to process info; talking to local doctor/health worker
- Make It Easy: Convenience with a focus on equity; “I want it accessible, but don’t push me.”



*Beyond information needs, what would be helpful to make a decision about getting vaccinated?*

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS WITH LATINX



*To what extent do you feel a responsibility to get the vaccine to protect others in your community?*

- Evolving information needs: Information and misinformation about the vaccines and side effects is prevalent; and there's a need for clear information and about how to access the vaccine
- Values/Lived Experience: Vaccine roll-out has let the community glimpse the possibility of getting "back to normal" – economy/jobs, school, and family gatherings
- Support Decision-Making: Hearing from local members of the Latinx community who have received vaccination has been meaningful
- Make It Easy: Materials in Spanish are important

# Wave 2 – Key Findings

- Increased comfort for many
- Perspective and emphasis varied by community
- Safety concerns persist
- Information needs are evolving
- Concerns about the speed of vaccine development diminished
- Experience with the roll-out of vaccines has been uneven; but frustrating for many
- There is still a “Wait and Learn” approach for many
- Community conversations are important to customizing support for decision-making
- For those who don’t want a vaccination now, or maybe ever, there was an interest in how else, beyond vaccination, they can help end the pandemic
- Meeting this moment

# VACCINE MEDIA CAMPAIGN



# The vaccination norm **doesn't feel relevant**

... because they don't see themselves reflected in it.

- **Many already think they're in the minority in their decision / wariness.**

They see pictures of people getting vaccinated. They know family and friends who have gotten it.

- **They've received criticism and ridicule for their position,** which can make them defensive and entrenched. Many have similar feelings about other vaccines as well, not just COVID, and believe in more natural, homeopathy.

- **Define themselves differently** from those eager to get vaccinated:
  - Vulnerable populations that can't further risk catching COVID (seen as reasonable)
  - People wanting things to open up and get "back to normal" (seen as naive and less adaptable)
  - People who can afford to weather the side effects from the vaccine

# Why unified campaigns are **difficult** for these **populations**



*"They're just trying to get people vaccinated. They don't understand me specifically."*

**We'll Get Through This Together**

1

## Side effect strugglers

- Concerned with the impact of side effects (known and unknown)
- Scared of feeling / getting sick or having a particularly adverse reaction
- Struggle to imagine managing severe side effects in their life (taking off work, taking care of children, etc.)

2

## Confident and in control

- Have adjusted to pandemic life
- Reporting knowing and taking steps to prevent infection
- Feel confident and safe in approach
- Versus the unknown impacts of the vaccine
- Interest in vaccine once it's been time-tested and further proven

3

## Not a conspiracy theorist, but

...

- Earned distrust of institutions, grounded in real, historical abuse, as well as rumored instances
- Range from broad suspicion to specific theories (e.g., Bill Gates' population control)
- Feel defensive and justified in suspicion



# Guiding principles

Memorable

Transparent

Non-judgmental

Informative

- Give people information to make the choice for themselves
- Inform about the whole process, especially what happens after the vaccine
- Avoid messages of blame
- People feel skeptical about the vaccine's safety & long-term effects
- Don't presume to speak for a community
- Be supportive of other safe, precautionary approaches, not just vaccination



# Short Term Crises, Long Term Solutions

Opportunities to address systems and processes through policy solutions



# THANK YOU!

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