

International study reveals factors contributing to COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among health care providers

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A new 23-country study by a multidisciplinary team of researchers in the journal *Vaccine* sheds light on the factors that contribute to COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among health care providers.

To assess the associations between self-reported [vaccine hesitancy](#) and a number of sociodemographic and COVID-19 vaccine perception factors, CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (CUNY SPH) Senior Scholar Jeffrey Lazarus, Dean Ayman El-Mohandes, and colleagues from the School of Health Administration at Dalhousie University in Halifax and the Barcelona Institute for Global Health developed a [cross-sectional survey](#) relating to perceptions of risk, efficacy, safety and trust, and current COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

The survey was administered to 23,000 adults in Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South

Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States in June 2021. Among the respondents, 3,295 identified as health care providers, such as physicians, nurses and community health workers.

Responses revealed that, although most health care providers had received one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, a substantial minority reported hesitancy. Four hundred ninety-four (15.0%) of the participants reported being reluctant to accept a COVID-19 vaccine, and 132 (4.0%) of those said they would outright refuse it.

Of the health care providers surveyed, physicians were the least hesitant. Vaccine hesitancy was more likely to occur among those with less than the median income and, to a lesser degree, younger age. Safety and risk concerns and lack of trust that vaccines would be equitably distributed were strongly associated with hesitancy, less so were concerns about the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines.

Previous studies have aimed to assess the potential acceptance of a COVID-19 vaccine among health care providers, but few have been published since the vaccines became widely available.

"These findings are troubling," says Dean El-Mohandes. "Since health care workers' hesitancy may influence community perceptions negatively, especially among patients and [family members](#), and can contribute to their refusal or delayed uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine."

"Vaccine hesitancy can impede the potential success of global vaccination campaigns, and, in turn, our ability to control the COVID-19 pandemic," says Dr. Lazarus. "Training and campaigns reinforcing vaccine safety, dissemination of

scientific data underpinning vaccine development, in addition to clear, consistent, and comprehensive information and engagement supporting the equitable distribution of vaccines are all potentially useful strategies to encourage health care professionals who are hesitant to vaccinate."

More information: Jeanna Parsons Leigh et al, Factors affecting COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among healthcare providers in 23 countries, *Vaccine* (2022). DOI: [10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.04.097](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.04.097)

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