

Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset

Feedback report:
COVID-19 Vaccine Report

March 2021



Introduction

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our gratitude to all of our partners across Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) who helped to share the survey with their networks, and to the local residents who took part.

Purpose of this work

The purpose of this work was to hear from local people and understand their views of the COVID-19 vaccine and whether or not there is hesitancy in getting vaccinated.

At the beginning of February we invited people across B&NES to take part in a survey to find out their views, attitudes and concerns towards the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out and the communications that have supported this. This was part of a wider piece of work undertaken by local Healthwatch throughout England and nationally.

The findings of the survey enable us to provide rapid insight to NHS England, the Clinical Commissioning Group and local GP practices in B&NES and to help Healthwatch England build the national picture.

About

This report focuses on:

- Attitudes towards the vaccine
- Logistical access to the vaccine
- Experience of the roll-out

Who did we hear from?

165 people took part in the survey. The majority of people who took part in the survey were aged between 55 - 84 years. The highest proportion of people - over 50% - telling us they were aged between 65 -74, with 67% of respondents identified as women and 31% as men.

Attitudes to the vaccine

We found that the majority of respondents - nearly 85% - had a very positive attitude towards vaccines in general. Nearly 90% of respondents had heard positive information about the COVID vaccine and a similar number felt that the information from the NHS or the Government about the vaccine and its roll out had been communicated clearly and effectively, although there was confusion around the booking process.

When asked how likely it would be that they would get the COVID-19 vaccine, at no charge through the NHS, we were told:

- 80% had already had the vaccine
- 17% definitely would have it
- 1% probably would have it
- 1% probably not have it
- 1% definitely would not have it

Four people expressed hesitancy about the vaccine, telling us they definitely would not or probably would not have it.

Gender: Female respondents expressed more hesitancy than male respondents but as the numbers are so low - three out of 165 respondents - we cannot draw any significant conclusions from this.

Ethnicity: The majority of respondents to this survey - nearly 85% (140) - were White British.

Reasons for resistance and concern

Even some of those people who were positive about the vaccine had some concerns, and the following reasons were given:

- 19% said they could not be vaccinated for health reasons
- 4% said they did not think the vaccine will be safe
- 15% said they did not think the vaccine will be effective
- 12% did not trust the intention behind the vaccine
- 12% did not think the coronavirus posed enough risk to them
- 12% said they would want to wait until others have had it first
- 8% said they were concerned about the ingredients used in it
- 54% said they were not sure

Vaccine trust

Whilst people overall welcomed the arrival of the vaccine and were happy to be vaccinated, nevertheless concerns were still voiced about it.

What people told us:

- “Worried that not enough testing for any long term affects.” Female, 55-64
- “Concerned the government is doing it wrong, such as a longer delay between jobs than recommended” Male, 35-44
- “The way it is being pushed doesn’t sit well with me, i want to know long term effects and don’t want injections 2-4 times each year either. Also I don’t believe it effects fertility but I am considering a family now, [possibly] IVF and don’t want any additional chemicals. Female, 35-44
- “Informed consent is absent from the process” Woman, 65-74
- “Some friends with serious health issues are worried it will react with their current meds” Woman, 55-64

Logistical problems

We asked respondents if there was anything that may stop them from taking a vaccine when it is made available to them, despite wanting to have the vaccine. The majority of people were clear that they would have the vaccine no matter what, but for some people there were possible logistical issues, such as distance they may have to travel to get the vaccine. For those people who would struggle to get the vaccine, every effort should be made to make it as easy as possible for them.

Respondents were able to select more than one option and we heard:

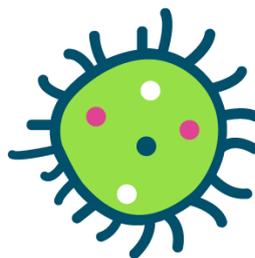
- 93% said nothing would stop them from getting the vaccine
- 4% said the fact that they would have to get public transport or a taxi to the location of the vaccine appointment might stop them getting it
- 5% said the distance to the location where the vaccine appointment takes place might stop them from getting it
- 4% said the times available to have the vaccine appointment might stop them from getting it
- 1% said having to book the vaccine appointment online might stop them getting it
- 3% said not being able to book a vaccine appointment at their GP surgery might stop them getting it
- 1% said they were not sure

Motivation for getting the vaccine

We asked people to tell us the main reason why they would want to be vaccinated. They

were able to pick more than one response:

- 90% said that it was to protect their friends and family from getting COVID-19
- 85% said that it would be to protect themselves against getting COVID-19
- 84% said that it would help society in general to get back to normal again
- 80% said it would be to protect people who are vulnerable/at higher risk of getting COVID-19
- 80% said to help protect the NHS
- 77% said it was the responsible thing to do
- 71% said it would help get the economy going again
- 27% said that that they wanted to visit older family members at home or in care homes and the vaccine would ensure this was safe for them
- 25% said that a medical/healthcare professional e.g. GP, nurse, pharmacist, recommends it
- 9% said that it would enable them to get back to work
- 8% said a family member/friend recommended it
- 1% did not know or were not sure



Experience of vaccine roll out

80% of the respondents had already received their vaccine. Some respondents chose to expand on how this went and it is clear from the feedback we received that the experience for them was very positive.

The professionalism of staff and the speed and efficiency of the administration of the

vaccination centres was applauded. The sentiment gleaned from the feedback received was that services across the country have done a remarkable job at organizing the vaccine roll out, often having to adapt to last minute changes quickly.

What people told us:

- “Roll out impressive.” **Female, 65-74**
- “Very easy to book and smooth running at vaccine site” **Female, 65-74**
- “My wife and I are looking forward to getting the 2nd booster vaccination hopefully in less than 12 weeks from the date of our 1st vaccination on 22nd January. The whole setup in our experience at The Pavilion, Bath was extremely well organised and very efficiently run. Thank you to all concerned.” **Male, 75-84**
- “I think the roll out of vaccines has been done very efficiently and effectively. Well done, NHS! **Female, 65-74**
- “I was impressed by the friendly efficiency of dispensing the vaccine at The Pavilion. It felt safe and was very well coordinated. I'm very grateful to the staff and volunteers and I hope when the time becomes appropriate they will receive recognition from Bath Council and the people of Bath.” **Male, 65-74**
- “I was vaccinated at Somer Centre, Midsomer Norton. Extremely well organised and efficient. Thankyou.” **Male, 65-74**
- “Organised extremely well - all friends and family who have been vaccinated say the same thing irrespective of where they had it done.” **Female, 65-74**
- “Had 1st vaccination at Bath Pavillion today. System ran like clockwork. Medical staff and volunteers were first rate. They all deserve a massive thankyou. (Perhaps a party when we are back to normal and a pay rise.)” **Male, 65-74**

Communication and the vaccine rollout

Whilst the roll-out has largely been praised, a number of people told us that they found the booking system confusing and there was anxiety about when they would be getting their second vaccine.

What people told us:

- “Confusion caused to many by overlapping offers from local G.P. hubs and NHS England letters. Plus wasted resources in posting to people already accepted offers.” **Female, 65-74**
- “I would have liked to be given a firm date for the second vaccination. When I asked, they did not know.” **Female, 85-94**

What people told us:

- “I would have liked to be given a firm date for the second vaccination. When I asked, they did not know.” Female, 85-94
- “My wife and I were offered vaccinations at different times, which was worrying” Male, 65-74
- “Confusing and very poor communication about what the National and local booking services are for the public who don’t see these joined up. Poor experience for my elderly mother who was not invited and had to chase Improved FAQ needed covering questions raised by patients” Female, 45-54
- “The appointment system needs to be better. My wife first got a call-up text, only to get another one an hour later saying the first one was a mistake and to ignore it. Then she got a letter from GP saying they’d been trying to contact her by phone (they hadn’t) and did she not want a vaccination (very odd wording!)? Then, when she called them, they couldn’t make the appointment then, and someone would call back ... problem with that is that the number was withheld and we don’t answer such calls. No message was left. So we had to endure a couple of days answering junk calls just on the off-chance that one might be about a vaccination appointment. Got there eventually, but the overall performance was poor and unnecessarily trying for such an important thing. You should publicise the number from which appointment calls will come, and not withhold it when making the calls, so that people can answer with confidence. And LEAVE A MESSAGE!!!” Man, 55-64
- “More mention of when the second vaccination will be given and the procedure for booking etc.” Man, 85-94
- “Rather confusing for elderly relatives trying to book online and then having had a letter getting a call from surgery afterwards!” Woman, 55-64
- “I understand my GP practice where I had my Jab can no longer do it. So what happens for my second Jab and how will I find out” Man, 75-84
- “I was sent a letter inviting me for the vaccination at the Racecourse, I then received 4 texts from my health centre inviting me to have the vaccination there. Very confusing and a total waste and duplication of effort. Man, 65-74”
- “I was, at first, cautious about the web address sent to me via text to book my vaccination as it was not an NHS or GOV identity. I felt that it could be a scam message. The message on booking the second jab is unclear, news articles said that you book both appointments together but in my case I do not have a second booking yet.” Man, 65-74

What next?

We continue to speak to people in B&NES about their experiences of the vaccine roll out. Whilst we know that confusion can be felt by people about how safe the vaccine is and about how they go about getting the vaccine, the feedback we have received so far has been largely positive.

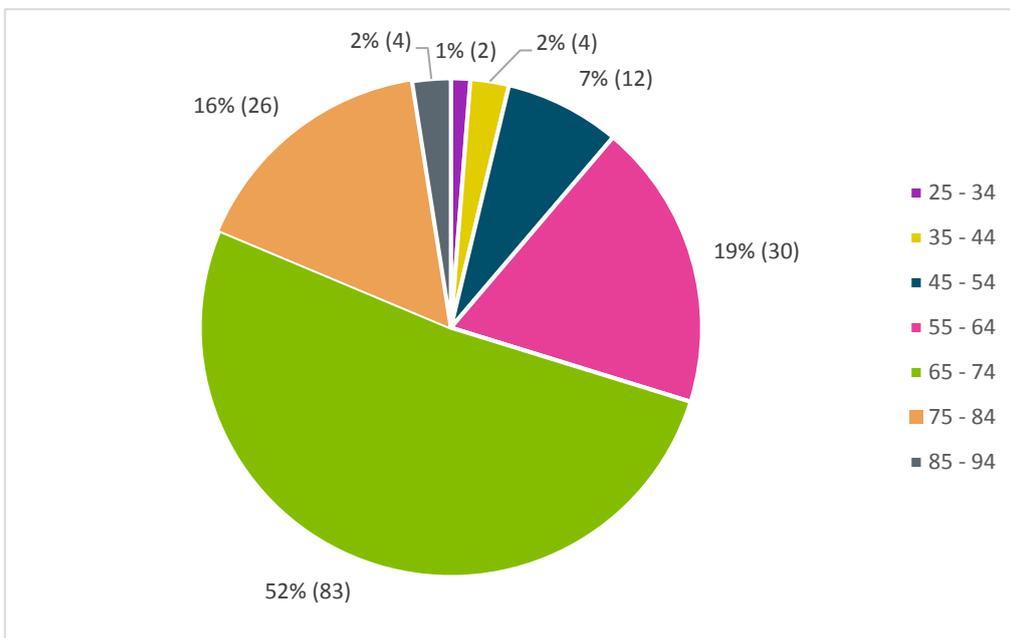
That is not to say that vaccine hesitancy does not exist - it does. Collectively we need to make every effort to understand why people feel the way they do and not make judgements about those views. The government and services also need to ensure that the information provided is clear, easy to understand and consistent - and crucially is available in multiple formats and languages. The pandemic has meant that things have moved at pace and it can be confusing to navigate an ever changing landscape.

Talk to us

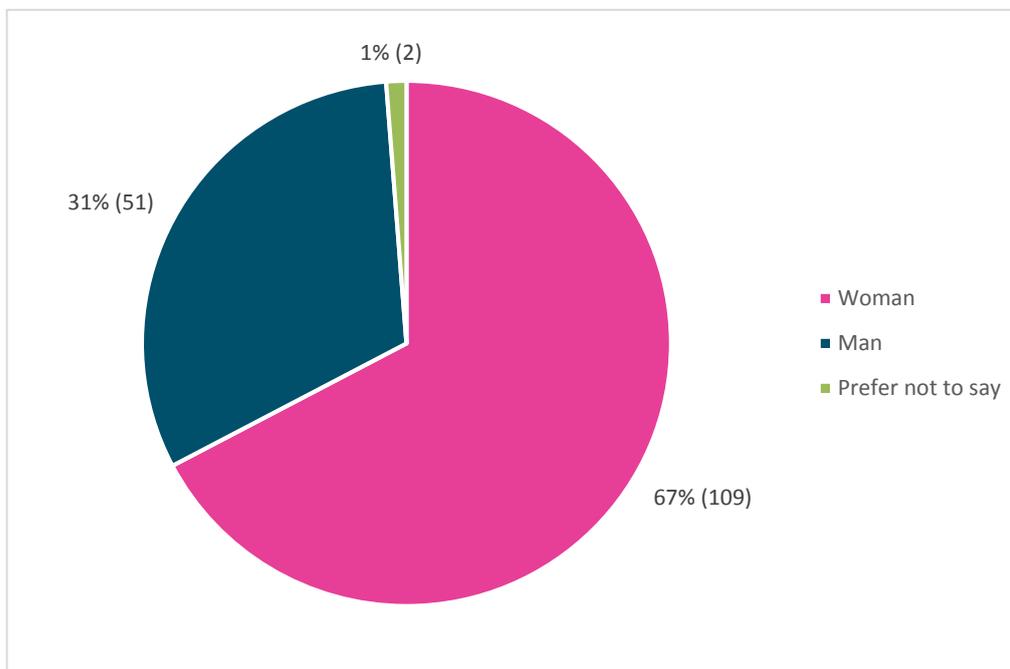
If you want to speak to us about your experience of the COVID-19 vaccine speak to one of the team by emailing info@healthwatchbathnes.co.uk, by calling 01225 232 401 or by going to www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk

Demographics

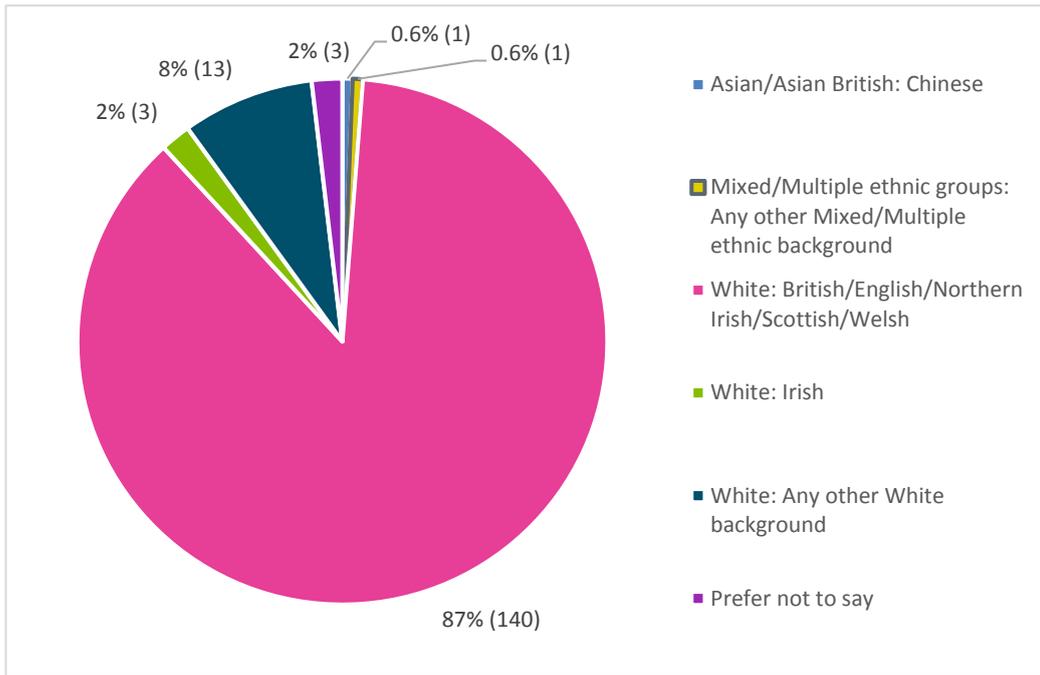
Age:



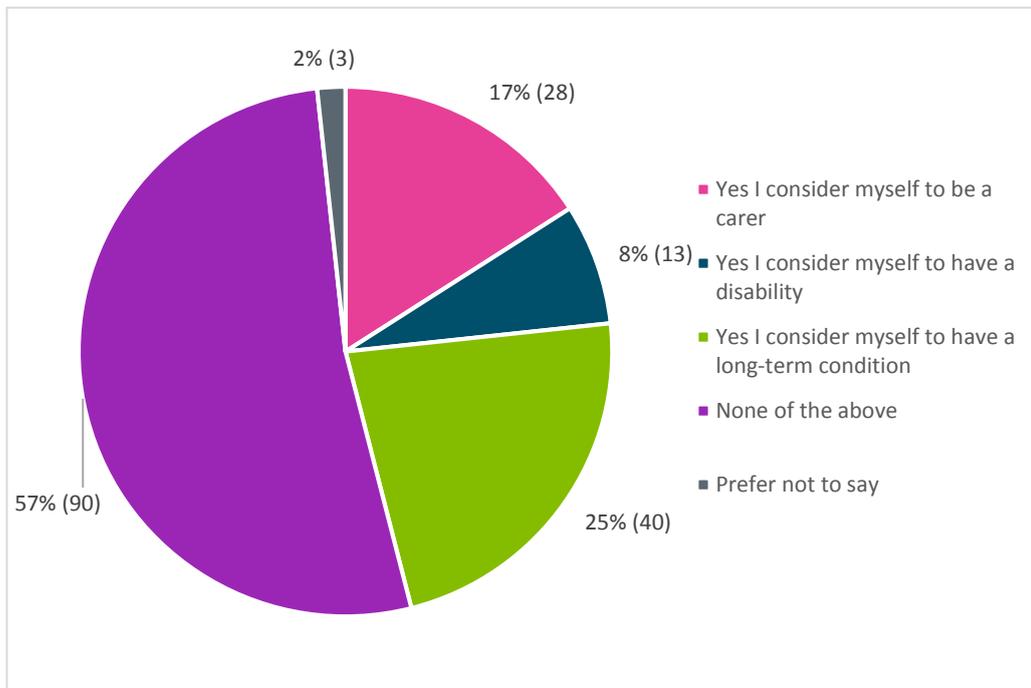
Gender:



Ethnicity



Do you consider yourself to be a (family) carer, have a disability or a long-term health condition?



*Respondents could pick more than one answer