

Vaccine Uptake and Hesitancy Among People Experiencing Homelessness in Toronto, Canada

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to understand the impact COVID-19 has had on your life, your thoughts about the vaccine, and any other ways you are staying safe during the pandemic.

[Have both interviewers introduce themselves, who they are, where they come from, etc.]

You can stop the interview at any time, take a break, stop entirely, ask that the recording stop, or skip any questions you do not want to answer. Also, as a reminder, the reason the interview is being recorded is because direct quotes from the interview might be used in future publications and conferences, however no identifying information will be included, meaning no one will be able to tell that it is you. Do you have any questions before we begin? [Answer any questions they have]

I am going to turn the recorder on now.

Section I: Experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic

- 1. As a start, we are curious about how has life been during the pandemic? How has your life changed because of the pandemic?**

Follow-up:

*Has your **housing or shelter changed** during the pandemic?*

Prompt:

- Have you moved around to different housing, shelters or encampments? (Probe: Why did you change housing or shelter locations? OR what influenced your decision to change locations?)*
 - Since the pandemic began, has your ability to **access services changed**? Prompts:*
 - Can you provide some examples of how your access to services has changed?*
 - How about other services that you were accessing before COVID? (Probe: libraries, drop-in spaces, food bank, harm reduction, etc.)*
- 2. We know that people have had different experiences during the pandemic. Some communities have been hit harder than others, some communities have experienced better or worse responses and support from the government. How have issues of race have influenced your experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic? And how about issues of gender?**

3. **We also know that different forms of discrimination can play a very important role in someone's experiences, and this may have increased for some during the pandemic. Have you experienced forms of discrimination that have impacted your experience during the pandemic? How so or in what ways?**
- Has racism influenced your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic? Has sexism influenced your experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic? Any other experiences of discrimination?
4. **Have you felt safe during this pandemic? Can you tell me a bit more about that?**
- Probes:**
- During the pandemic, who have you considered to be a part of your support system?*
 - Where do you stay right now? Do you feel safe there?*
 - Do you have a good support system, in general? Do you hangout with people who support you, make you feel good? Who are the people you feel tied to?*
 - Are there certain places you go to that feel safe and supportive? (e.g. certain drop-in centres).*

Section II: Opinions towards the COVID-19 vaccine

These next questions are focused on understanding your experiences with vaccination and opinions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

5. **Do you get routine vaccines?** (If need example: The tetanus shot? The flu shot?)
- If no: Can you help me understand why?
 - If yes: Where would you normally go to get these vaccines? Why do you go to this place?
6. **I am interested in hearing about your thoughts or feelings about the COVID-19 vaccine?**
- Prompts:**
- Do you feel like this vaccine is a good idea, that it is safe?*
 - Do you feel like this vaccine is effective?*
 - That it will keep yourself and others around you safe?*
 - What have you thought about the side effects of the vaccine? Did this impact your decision to get the vaccine, or when to get it?*
 - Have your thoughts about the vaccine changed since the pandemic started?*
 - Do you have a vaccine preference?*
 - (IF express concerns)** *Can you explain a bit more about those concerns? Do others you know share these concerns?*

7. I am interested in hearing where you get your information about COVID-19 and the vaccine? Who do you talk to in order to get information?

Prompts:

- a. *Are there people you trust who gave you information?*
- b. *Where do you think most people in your social circle are getting their information about COVID and the vaccine?*
- c. *How do you keep up-to-date with all the changing information/updates?*

8. Can you tell me about some of the COVID-19 vaccine information campaigns you have seen (like posters and TV ads)? Do you think vaccination campaigns have been useful or helpful for you?

- a. *What did you like or find useful about the campaigns? Anything you didn't like or found useless?*

Section III: Enablers and barriers to uptake

9. Have you been offered a vaccine? If so, did you get vaccinated?

[If vaccinated] I am curious to hear why you decided to get vaccinated?

[If unvaccinated] I am curious to hear why have decided not to get vaccinated?

Probes:

- a. *If COVID sticks around, will you get vaccinated in the future?*
- b. *If you have only dose 1, will you get the second dose? Why or why not?*

10. Where did you get vaccinated OR where were you offered a vaccine (e.g. mobile vaccination clinic at encampments, vaccination clinic at shelters, went to a drop-in clinic, pharmacy, etc.)? What was the experience like?

11. Are your friends, family, community choosing to get vaccinated? What are their reasons (for getting or NOT getting the vaccine)? How do you feel about that?

Probe: How do others in your social groups and community feel about the vaccine? What do people say about the vaccine?

Follow-ups:

- a. *Do their decisions about getting the COVID-19 vaccine influence what you think (or thought) about getting vaccinated?*

Section IV: Strategies to improve vaccine uptake

Next, I am going to ask you questions about how vaccination strategies can be changed or improved.

12. I am curious to hear what you think needs to change to improve people's experiences surrounding COVID-19 vaccination?**a. If vaccinated: If you were in charge of getting people vaccinated, what would you do to help get more people vaccinated?**

Prompts:

- i. What challenges could be addressed so people can more easily get access to the vaccine, or convince/support people to get vaccinated?*
- ii. How do you think COVID-19 vaccines should be delivered in the future?*

b. If vaccinated: Are there things you would change about your experience getting the vaccine? Are there some things that could have been better? What aspects did you like about your experience when getting the vaccine?

Prompts:

- i. Staff, location, physical space, safety considerations, time of day.*

13. If NOT vaccinated: Is there anything that you think would support you or change your mind about getting vaccinated? If you did think the vaccine was a good idea, how do you think public health could get more people vaccinated?