

Navigating Access: A Study to Examine Vaccine Equity through Healthcare Access, Coverage, and Transparency among the Black Community within the Greater Boston Area

Presented by: Camille Scott, MPH, CPhT
Preceptor: Dee Smith, MHSA



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Bring to light the role of retail pharmacies and grocers compared to top pharmacy chains (i.e., CVS/Walgreens, etc.).

Assess immunization rates within retail grocers and pharmacies to determine the gap in care.

Primary Goals of Study



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Objectives



1. Measure immunization access in retail pharmacies.
2. Collect data on uninsured and non-covered customers.
3. Design marketing material to distribute during the check-out process.
4. Identify outreach opportunities to ensure customers have comprehensive access to health coverage.

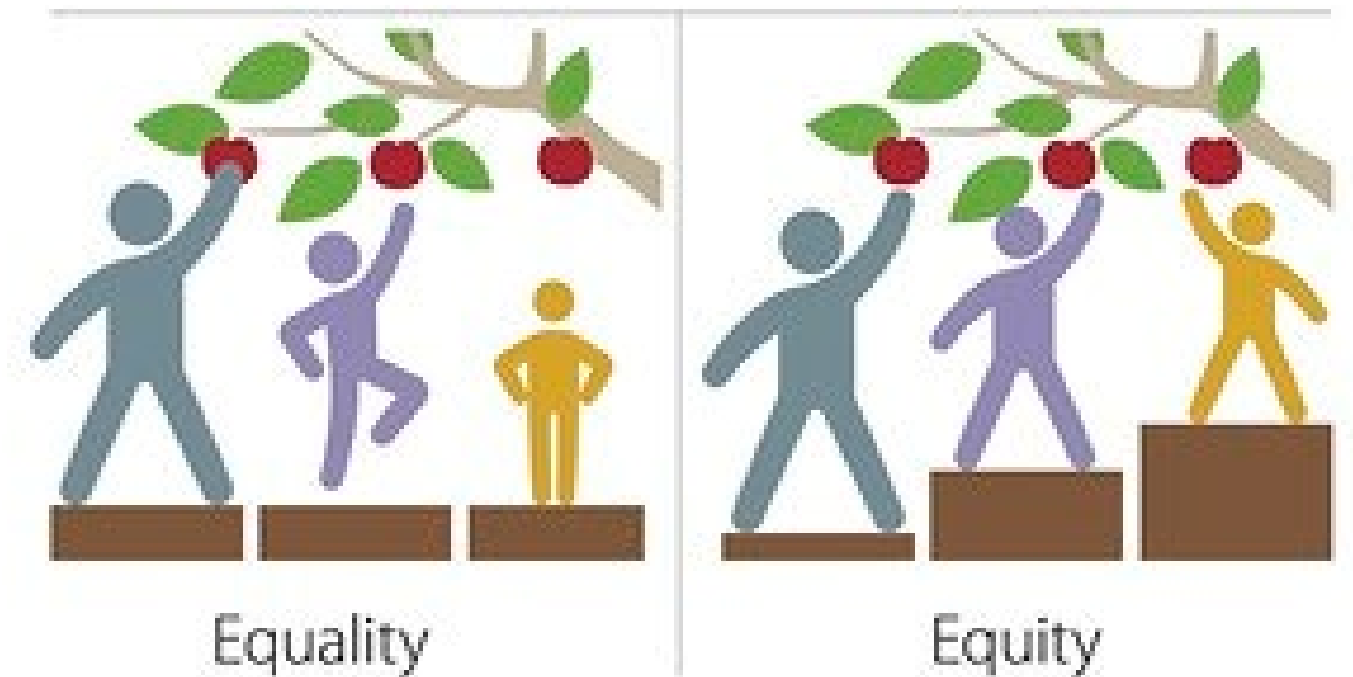


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Impact of Study

As the Black population in Greater Boston continues to grow, it's crucial to assess healthcare inequities and biases.

This study will examine healthcare equity systems and information dissemination practices to identify issues in obtaining healthcare access, vaccines, and accurate health information in communities such as Worcester, Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, Chelsea, Lynn, Hyde Park, and Brockton.



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Purpose of Study



Research aimed to investigate healthcare disparities faced by Black individuals in Greater Boston, with a focus on health insurance, vaccine access, and information sources. The National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE) Greater Boston chapter designed and created the study, aligning with its mission to advance Black healthcare leaders and improve care for underserved communities.

This phase 3 project seeks to inform evidence-based interventions and policies to promote equitable healthcare access and improve outcomes for the Black population.



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Facts and Statistics



The Greater Boston Area has had a significant population growth of 64% since 1980, with more Haitian, Nigerian, Cape Verdean, and Jamaican residents providing a robust cultural diversity within the Black community.

(Jonas, 2023)

Boston's historical racial segregation has been noted as one of the most racist cities in America, posing a challenge to the health and well-being of local Black residents.

(Enwemeka, 2023)

The rise of new digital news platforms, especially stemming from social media outlets, can lead to the spread of misinformation. With over 50% of consumers who rely on social media for news updates, people are at risk for misinformation from non-credible sources, leading to incorrect health decisions or avoiding health services in total.

("Social Media and News Fact Sheet," 2023)

Study Population

Involving over 155 participants aged 19 to 65, the analysis examined the impact of age and race on the collected data.

The racial composition included 0.6% American Indian/Native Alaskan, 4.5% Asian, 42.3% Black/Black Descent, 5.8% Hispanic/Latino, 41% White/Caucasian, and 5.8% Other.

It was further stratified into a separate subset of data that only revealed Black/Black Decent participant responses (n=63).



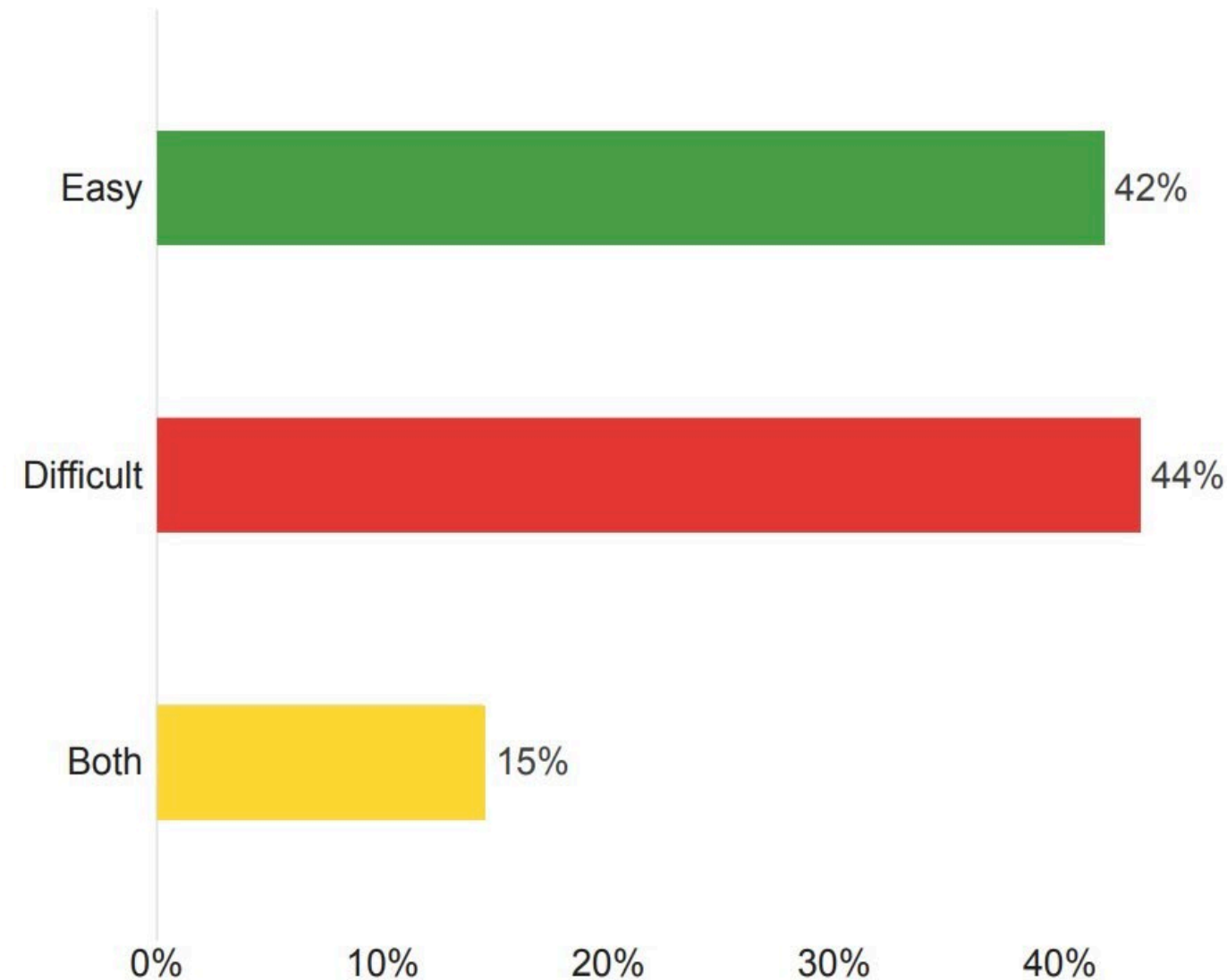
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Results

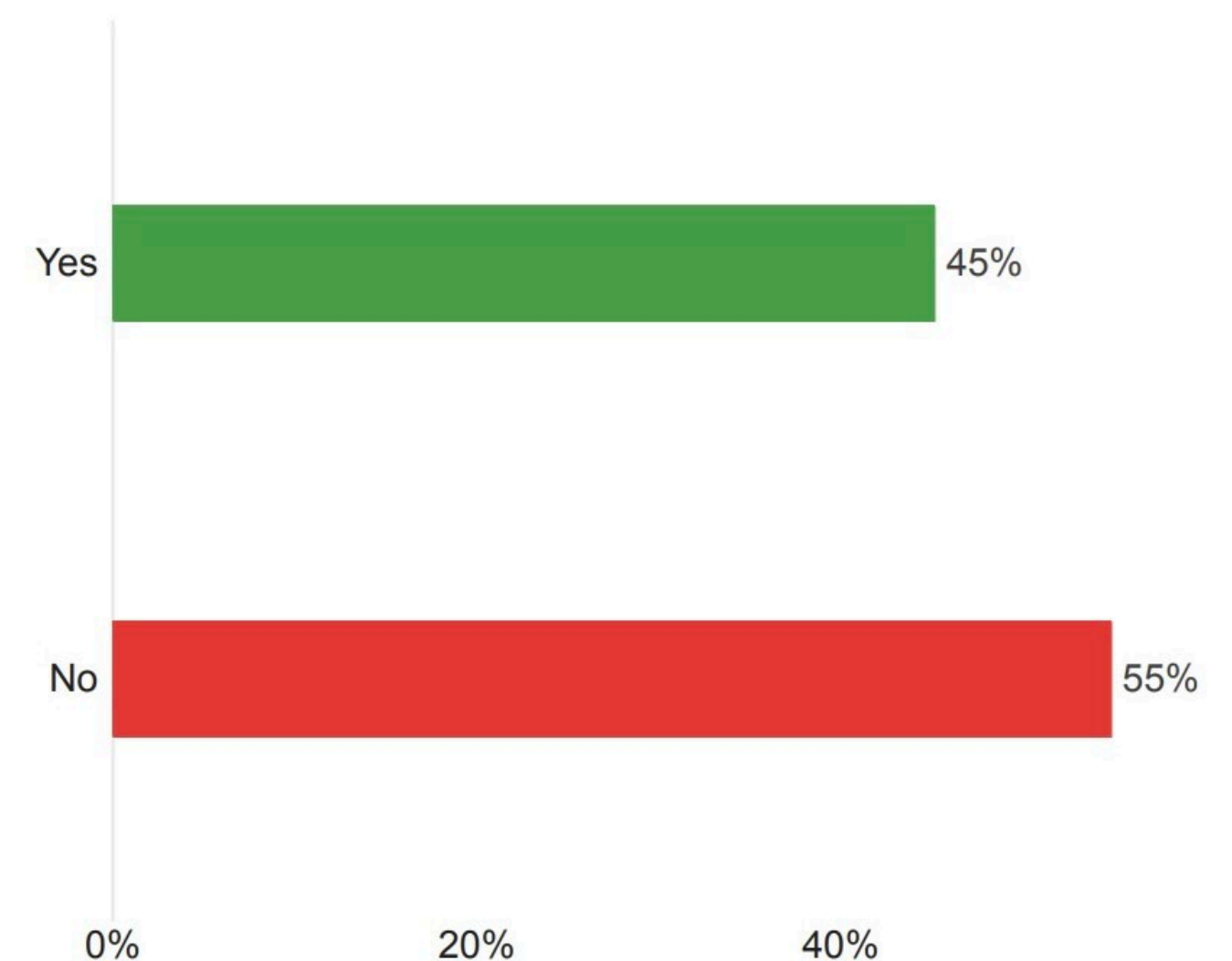
Since COVID-19, education of vaccines still can straddle between being challenging and easy when people want to know the associated benefits and risks when considering vaccination.

Even though the pandemic provided resources for vaccine accessibility, people still tend to find it hard to be vaccinated against COVID, influenza, pneumococcal viruses, and RSV.

How easy is it for you to learn about vaccines?



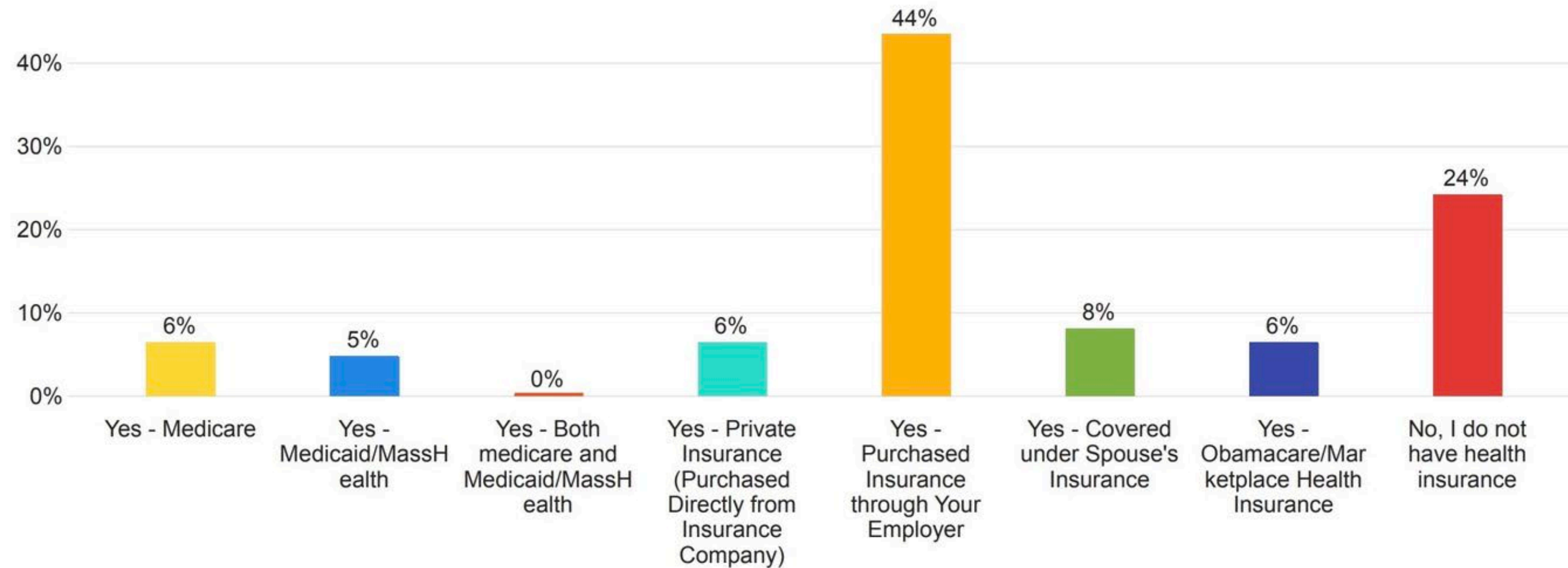
If you want a vaccine, do you find it easy to get them?



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Results

Do you currently have a primary health insurance?



Primary insurance among the population has been obtained by their employer or people tend to not be insured at all, which poses a threat to obtaining healthcare and maintaining health.



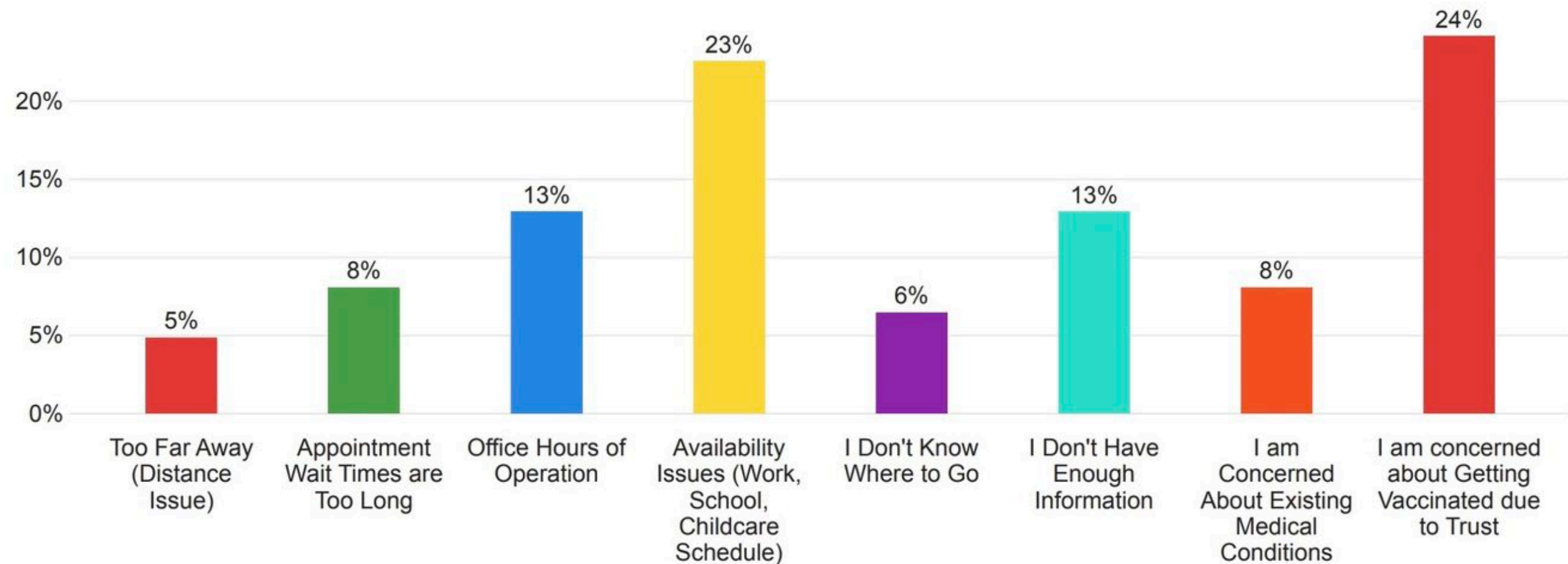
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Results

A portion of the population expresses their difficulties in receiving vaccines between availability issues and their overall trust in vaccinations.

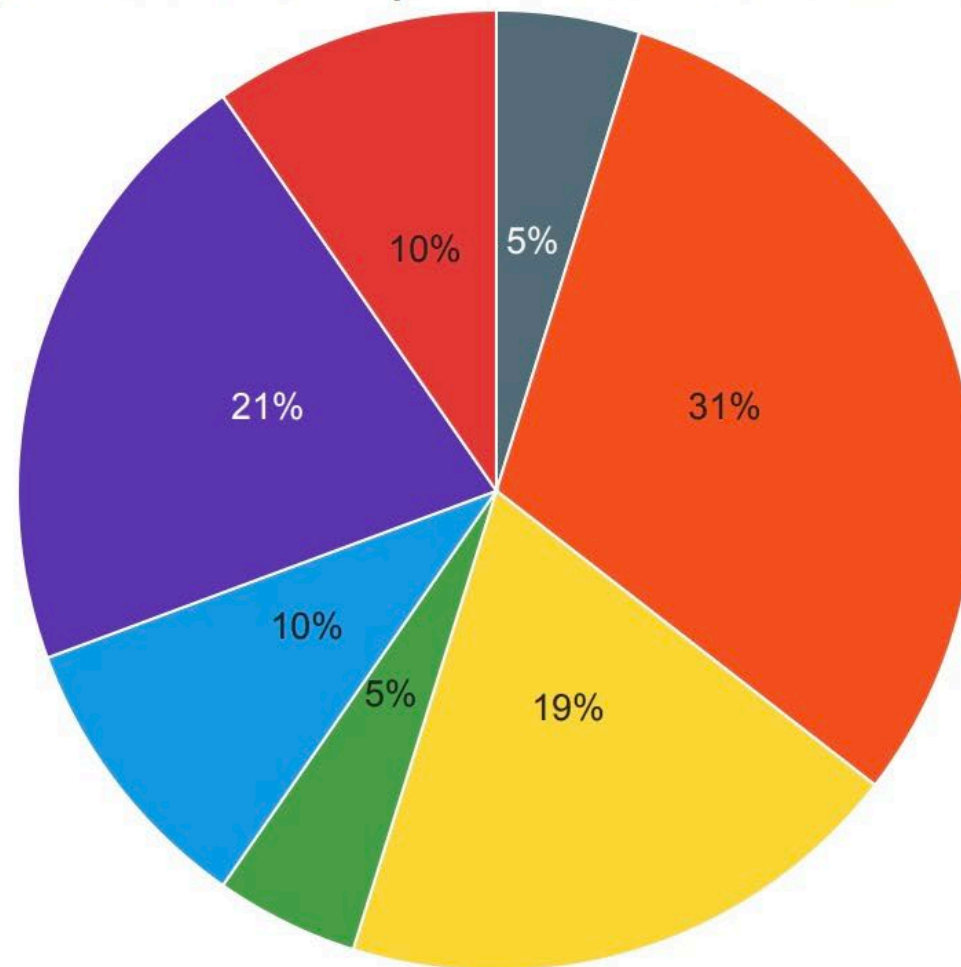
Knowing what barriers are present for the community can help present new interventions for the community to receive vaccines.

What makes it most difficult to receive vaccines?



Results

What are common places you turn to for up-to-date health information?



- News Sources (for example, TV, Radio, Billboards)
- Websites (for example, WebMD, Google)
- Healthcare Associations (for example, CDC, FDA, State Health Departments, and/or Public Health Officials)
- Healthcare Systems Websites (for example, Mass General Hospital)
- Professional Medical Specialist (for example, doctor, pharmacist, nurse, etc.)
- People You May Know (for example, family/friends, employer, religious/social groups)
- Social Media (for example, Instagram)

- 31% of people search websites (Google/WebMD) for up-to-date health information.
- Compared to the 21% who refer to family and friends for health information.
- A small percentage of the population relies on the news for health updates.



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Results

Most of the study population has noted that they do not have a primary care physician/family doctor they would normally turn to for healthcare needs.

Information such as this is important as it can relate to the current number of uninsured residents, at 24%, who may not have access to a provider due to out-of-pocket costs associated with it.

Do you have a primary care physician, family doctor, or nurse practitioner?



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Barriers & Challenges



- Losing participation from Star and Shaw Markets; Reasoning remains unknown of non-participation.
- Restarting search for new grocer/retail pharmacies to participate in survey collection.
- Meeting data collection time frame.



Survey Implementation

A robust community outreach initiative was undertaken to engage with key stakeholders and ensure widespread participation from the target population.

- Outreach efforts included contacting local churches, informing faith leaders and congregations about the study's objectives, and encouraging their participation.
- Members of the Divine Nine Greek organizations were engaged to leverage their influential community networks.



The Next Steps...

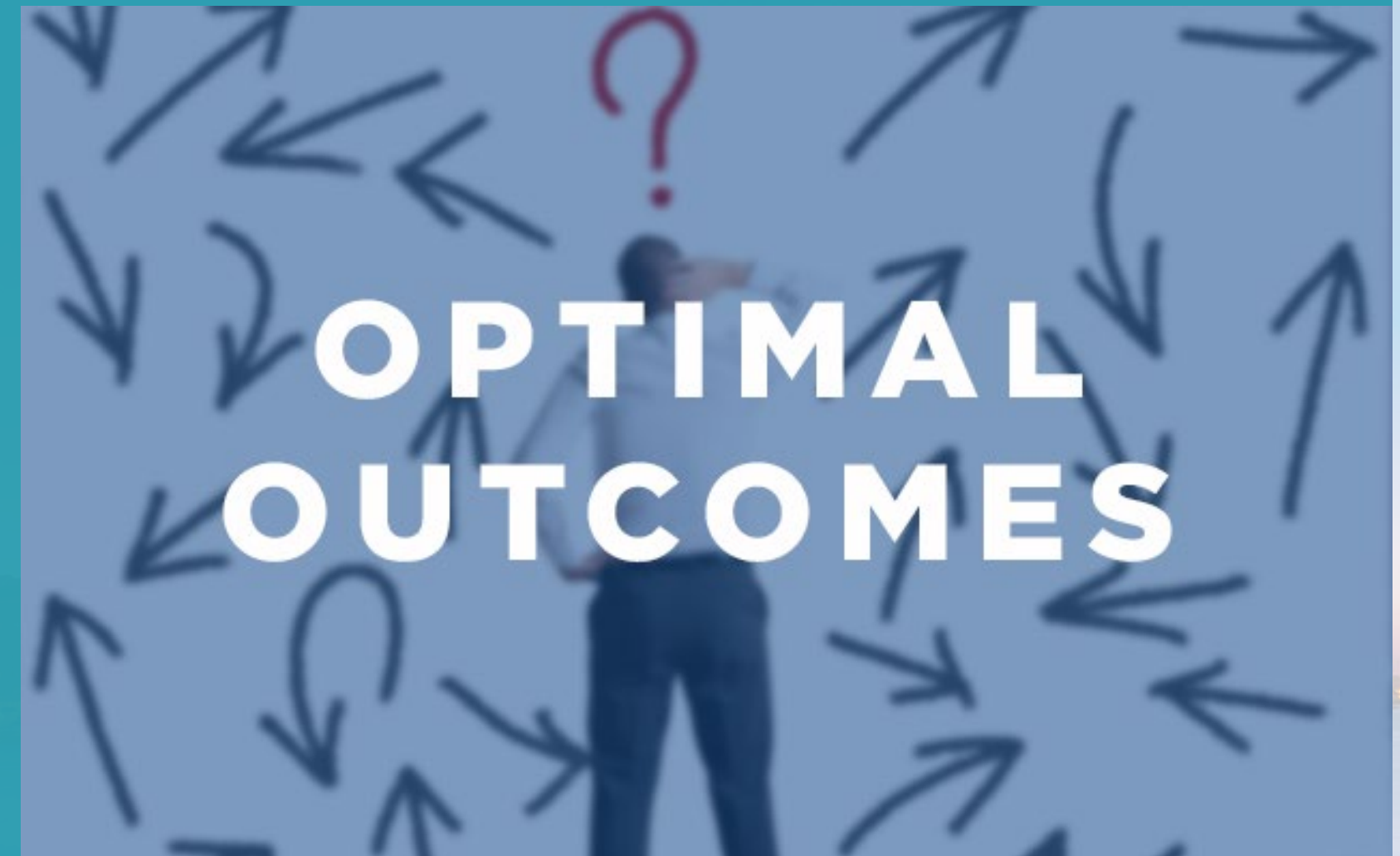


- Expanding outreach by bringing the survey to other spaces beyond local grocers and pharmacies.
- Looking for additional resources and support to connect with other grocery stores and retail pharmacies.
- Conducting a market analysis of available pharmacies in the research service areas.
- Identifying funding sources to support the ongoing research.

Convenient Health Access: Helping to produce easier access to immunizations within local grocery stores and pharmacies for quicker and more efficient access.

Identification of Care Gaps: Improved identification of gaps in care within the community, as the diverse participant base provides insights into various unmet needs and areas lacking adequate healthcare services.

Informed Interventions: The data collected helps to inform targeted interventions and policies aimed at addressing the identified gaps in care, ultimately improving health outcomes for the community.



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END OF PRESENTATION

Thank You

Project/Research Team:

Dee Smith

(dds5105@alumni.psu.edu)

&

Camille Scott

(Camille.scott@tufts.edu)



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