

# COVID-19 VACCINE HESITANCY:

*Engaging with Latinx Community Members  
of Harris County*

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Harris County  
**Public Health**  
Building a Healthy Community

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**Harris Cares:  
Focus Issues**



Chronic Diseases



Family Health



Emergency  
Preparedness



Environmental  
Health



Infectious  
Diseases



Injury



Mental and  
Behavioral Health

# UNDERSTANDING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTING EQUITABLE AND INFORMED COVID-19 VACCINATION DECISION-MAKING

COVID-19 has left a devastating impact on many communities, specifically communities of color that are already disproportionately affected by health disparities as documented in HCPH's landmark Health study, [Harris Cares 2020](#).

## Research Partners:



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

# NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials



*The COVID-19 pandemic is not only worsening historical inequities in Harris County, but it is overwhelmingly affecting the Latin community.*



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

- **Johns Hopkins** is coaching 3 LHDs:
  - \$20,000 to host 3 events on vaccine hesitancy
  - Direct incentive payments for facilitator and participants
  - Latinx community
    - Garfield County, Colorado
    - Fairfax County, Virginia
  - Native American
    - Blackfeet Tribe, Montana
    - Spirit Lake Tribe, North Dakota
  - African American
    - Baltimore City, Maryland
    - New Orleans, Louisiana

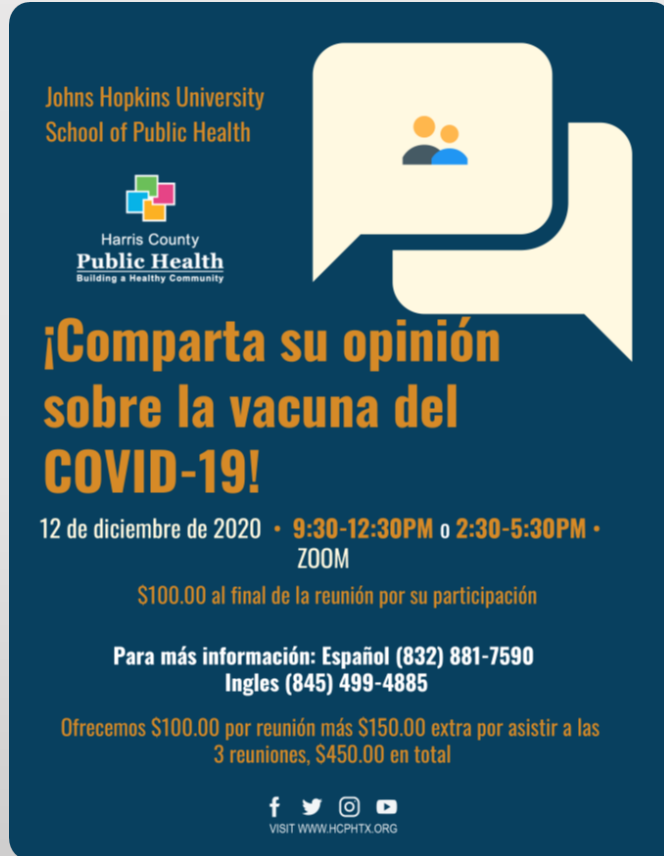


# METHODOLOGY

Planning,  
Identifying and  
Recruitment



# IDENTIFYING A FACILITATOR & RECRUITMENT



Johns Hopkins University  
School of Public Health

Harris County  
**Public Health**  
Building a Healthy Community

¡Comparta su opinión  
sobre la vacuna del  
COVID-19!

12 de diciembre de 2020 • 9:30-12:30PM o 2:30-5:30PM •  
ZOOM

\$100.00 al final de la reunión por su participación

Para más información: Español (832) 881-7590  
Ingles (845) 499-4885

Ofrecemos \$100.00 por reunión más \$150.00 extra por asistir a las  
3 reuniones, \$450.00 en total

f t i y  
VISIT WWW.HCPHTX.ORG

## Facilitator:

- Representative of **Latin community in HC**
- Bilingual in **Spanish**
- Strong community presence and commitment to timeline and role
- Able to participate in group coaching sessions with other facilitators
- Compensation is \$10,200 for all 3 meetings paid directly to the facilitator by Johns Hopkins.

## Participants:

- **25 participants** representative of Latinx community in Harris County
- All industries and backgrounds
- People **who are either hesitant, not hesitant, or neutral** towards the vaccine.
- Community members who are **vulnerable to severe COVID-19 outcomes.**
- Each participant is offered \$100 per session, with a bonus of \$150 if they attend all 3 events, totaling \$450.
  - Amazon gift card via email sent directly from Johns Hopkins to participants.

Thank you FARO, (Facilitated Assistance, Referral & Outreach)  
HHD, FIEL Houston, and Neighborhood Schools

# OVERVIEW- SESSION 1

*Two sessions (December & February) were held in Spanish leveraging interpreters who translated in real time*

- Introduce yourself and the impact COVID-19 has had on you. Would you get the vaccine?
  - What advice can you give to your health department?
  - What information do people need to know so they can decide whether to be vaccinated?
    - How can health departments share this information?
  - What would make it easier people in your community to get vaccinated, if they want one?
- **Example polling questions:**
    - Have you or have any of your family members been diagnosed with COVID-19?
    - If a COVID-19 vaccine is available to you this week at no cost, how likely are you to get it?
    - How likely would you trust the government?





Key Takeaways, Quotes, & Next Steps

# FINDINGS

# OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

## Barriers:

- *Understanding the interaction between new variants & vaccines*
- *Transportation- weekend vs. weekday*
- *Disorganization and lack of information*
- *Lack of trust - especially with healthcare*
- *Waiting for evidence of safety*
- *Awaiting notification of availability*
- *Generational differences*
- *Confusion caused by government messaging that differs at the federal, state and local levels*
- *Misinformation on social media*
- *Prior bad experiences with flu shot*
- *Limited quantities*
- *No information on where it will be available*
- *The cost associated (free vs. insurance information requested)*
- *Immigration status concerns*
- *Work requirements*
- *Anticipation for future vaccines and when they will be available*

“I think social media is a start, a campaign about the vaccine, the side effects, give the community as much information as possible. We need a specific campaign for Latinos with examples we understand in our language.”

“TV would be best, in their own language. We get great feedback and calls when we advertise on a newscast.”

“As far as access to information people may have a phone but may not understand how Zoom or Facebook live work. A lot of people don’t have access to a computer or a phone with internet.”





# OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS- December 2020

- **Session 1** participants were overall more hesitant and weren't fully trusting of government plans due to conflicting messaging.
- **Session 2** participants were more trusting, mainly because some participants work in health-related services.

**93%** of participants in December's Session 2 felt responsible to get the vaccine to protect others in the community.

- They mentioned that it is a result community and familial ties, especially concern for the elder generation.

Compared to **73%** in December's **Session 1** who expressed feeling responsible.

# OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS- February 2021

*What other thing would you need, aside from information, to help you make the decision to get vaccinated?*

- 57% said “Speaking with a public health expert”
- 43% said “Receive a recommendation from my doctor”
- 21% said “other”
- 14% said “more time to think about what’s best for me”
- 14% said “more conversations like these from other people in my community”
- 7% said “talk to my friends and family”

- Many participants had **received a first or second dose** by the February conversation.
- The most significant concern was about **long-term or secondary side effects**.
- Participants are **looking to other community members** (doctors, nurses, family) who received the early doses to build their understanding and confidence.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS- ACCESS

- Increased information about safety & **access**
- Make sites **accessible** by public transportation or near existing known testing locations
- Leverage **community centers** and natural points of contact (grocery stores)
- Leverage relationships with **apartment complexes** and **community centers**
- Having a **phone number for scheduling** is important
- **At-home vaccination options** are key for elder people or those with limited mobility

*Participants used the session as a safe space to share personal stories and their opinion on COVID-19 and vaccines or why they're hesitant about the COVID-19 Vaccine.*



*“Offer low cost to no cost shuttle services to the community centers that can give them the test or the shot”*

*“Also, we have to provide and explain more information, so people aren’t afraid of testing or vaccines. Being willing to leave information in the communities and answer any questions.”*

# TANGIBLE SOLUTIONS- KEEPING INFORMED

- **Build trust** by making the latest information readily available and being transparent
- Target information for **people with chronic conditions** about safety and availability
- Messaging **from trusted sources** (influencers, news media, radio.)
- Billboards, mail marketing, post cards, brochures are methods of **traditional marketing** this population would respond to
  - “Something tangible I can share with someone else”
- Leverage **WhatsApp** as a platform to help reach undocumented populations or those with limited cell phone access



# KEY TAKEAWAYS- BEYOND ACCESS & INFO

## Tangible Solutions:

- **Educate younger** adult generations so they can **educate older** adults of about efficacy and safety
- Make it easier for **young generations to book appointments** for elder generations
- **Incentivize** working together to encourage people to get vaccinated
- **Share results of studies, papers, journals**, etc. with the public frequently
- Share messaging that the vaccine is **FREE**
- **First-hand testimonials** are becoming increasingly important to build confidence
- **Engage employers** to help share information about how to access the vaccine
- Increasing outreach through **Facebook groups and small group conversations** can be an effective strategy to combat misinformation and share resources

What advice can you give to your local health department to help people in your community to get the vaccine? What can the health department do to overcome obstacles we talked about?

# Keeping the Conversation Flowing



**Upcoming Engagements:  
March 2021**



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# People Have Opinions!

- Community members want their voices heard. They appreciate being given a platform in expressing their beliefs about their health and future.
- Community events like this can produce pivotal change for communities.
- Support is need from partner organizations to assist in engaging community members via outreach and paying participants and facilitators for their time.



# HARRIS CARES:

*a 2020 Vision of Health in Harris County*

[PUBLICHEALTH.HARRISCOUNTYTX.GOV/RESOURCES/HARRIS-CARES](http://PUBLICHEALTH.HARRISCOUNTYTX.GOV/RESOURCES/HARRIS-CARES)

HARRIS CARES

# 2020

*a Vision of Health in Harris County*

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# Connect with us



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