

Vaccination status and motivators among Canadian Healthcare Workers during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Background: Vaccination of healthcare workers (HCWs) is a crucial issue for the protection of patients and the preservation of health systems, yet many remain not fully vaccinated.

Objectives: This study aims to: 1) determine the prevalence and determinants of vaccine hesitancy among HCWs in Canada; and 2) determine the primary motivators for vaccination in this population.

Methods: Three cross-sectional age, sex and province-weighted population-based samples each including 3,005 Canadians aged 18+ years completed the iCARE survey using an online polling firm between May 31 (time 1) and December 3rd, 2021 (time 3). Participants self-reported HCW status and vaccine status, and were dichotomized into vaccine hesitant (not vaccinated) or non-hesitant (partially or fully vaccinated).

Results: Of the 9011 participants, 580 (6,43%) were HCWs (n=171-220 across 3 surveys). Almost 8% of HCWs were vaccine hesitant. Younger age (p=0.001) and never being vaccinated against influenza (p=0.008) were associated with vaccine hesitancy. Adjusted multivariable analyses showed that survey period predicted vaccine hesitancy: HCWs were less likely to be hesitant during survey 2 (Sep 10 - 20, 2021) and 3 (Nov 15 – Dec 03rd, 2021) compared to 1 (May 31 - June 14, 2021). HCWs reported that: 1) having information that the vaccine is safe (55%) and 2) effective (42%) and 3) trusting the company who developed the vaccine (40%) would most likely motivate them to get vaccinated.

Conclusion: HCWs who are younger and had never been vaccinated against influenza are more likely to be vaccine hesitant, and that motives to get vaccinated were related to vaccine safety, efficacy, and trust. Results could be used to inform targeted intervention strategies in this important population.