Closing the Gap for Vaccine Hesitancy during the Last Mile of Vaccine Rollout

September 13, 2021
How is Canada doing with COVID-19 vaccine roll-out?

Canada is among the top countries in the world in terms of one dose coverage, and we are quickly gaining ground on two dose coverage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Share of people who received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, Sep 6, 2021</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>61.5% (Sep 4, 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
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COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Canada

As of September 6, 2021:
- 84.7% of eligible population has had at least one dose
- 77.4% have received their second dose

Vaccine coverage is even higher among many key groups, including those at increased risk:
- Older adults (>70 y.o: 95%)
- Health care providers (88%)
- Indigenous peoples (MB: at least one dose 86% – on reserve / 60% off reserve)

Vaccine coverage is lower among some populations:
- Youth (12-17: 78%)
  *May 5 approval of Pfizer-BioNTech for ages 12-15, relatively fast uptake since then.
- Young Adults (18-29: 74%)
- Also lower across age groups when coupled with lower education and income levels (~74%)

Vaccine coverage varies across regions:
- There are pockets across the country of low vaccine uptake; including northern parts of BC, AB and SK, southern rural Ontario, and southern Manitoba.
- Reasons for lower uptake in these regions are multifactorial and complex, and include access issues, prevailing political ideologies, regional industry and demographic and more.

Note: Methodology used to report administered doses may differ from one health region to another, which may imply small variations regarding percentage of 1st doses administered.

Data sources: COVID19Tracker.ca 2021, Saskatchewan PHU, Statistics Canada Population estimates 2021
Vaccine Hesitancy – Regional Hot Spots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONS (PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS)</th>
<th>% of eligible population with at least one dose (updated: Aug. 30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Northern BC (Northern Health) | 67.7%  
| Total population: ~ 301,000 people  
| Communities within region (examples): Peace River, Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Smithers  
| - significant agricultural sector  
| - high number of Indigenous people served by this health unit | |
| AB (North Zone, Central Zone) | 62.7-62.8%  
| Total population: ~940 000 people  
| Communities within region (examples): Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Red Deer  
| - North Zone is geographically the largest zone in AB  
| - North Zone (median age: 35 years) | |
| Northern SK (Far North Central, Far North West, Far North East) | 47.3-68.6%  
| Total population: ~52 000 people  
| Communities within region (examples): Stony Rapids, Fond du Lac, Clearwater River Dene Nation, Flin Flon  
| - large number of mining towns  
| - high proportion of First Nations and Metis peoples | |
| Southern MB (Southern Health) | 65.6%  
| Total population: ~ 212,000 people  
| Communities within region (examples): Southport, La Broquerie, Morden, Winkler  
| - large Mennonite population  
| - 70% of rural French-speaking Manitobans  
| - 7 First Nations communities and large Métis population  
| - region has historically had low uptake on seasonal flu shots and childhood vaccinations | |
| Ontario (Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit) | 72.1%  
| Total population: ~ 120,000 people  
| Communities within region (examples): Simcoe, Caledonia, Dunnville  
| - rural communities that include some urban centres  
| - most employed in trades, transport and equipment operations, sales & service  
| - second largest population of seasonal migrant farm workers per capita in ON)  
| - significant Mennonite population | |
Vaccine Hesitancy – Priority Populations (self-reported vaccine uptake/intention to vaccinate)

Aggregate findings across multiple public opinion research polls since December

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS</th>
<th>Black Canadians</th>
<th>Indigenous Peoples</th>
<th>Personal Support Workers (PSWs)</th>
<th>Parents (children &lt;12 y.o)</th>
<th>Parents (youth 12-17)</th>
<th>Young Adults (18-29 y.o.)</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>People with disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polling/Uptake - aggregate of multiple polls. Used only as baseline.</td>
<td>% have received/intend to receive at least one dose</td>
<td>64-73% (Jul 2021) Up from 58-59% (Dec 2020)</td>
<td>74-80% (Jul 2021) Up from 70-72% (Dec 2020)</td>
<td>70-85% (Jun 2021) Up from 61-69% (Dec 2020)</td>
<td>55-65% (Aug 2021)</td>
<td>70-75% (Jul 2021)</td>
<td>73-80% (Jul 2021) Up from 65-69% (Dec 2020)</td>
<td>75-82% (Jun 2021) Up from 69-77% (Dec 2020)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How have these gains been achieved?

✓ Removal of barriers to access
✓ Targeted and collaborative communications and advertising for priority and general populations
✓ Targeted outreach and support to mobilize trusted partners within hesitant communities
✓ Equipping health care providers with guidance, and tools to help inform their patients
✓ Mobilizing community-level intervention through grants and contributions programs, vaccine engagement sessions, stakeholder toolkits.
✓ Securing COVID 19 vaccine supply

1 StatsCan, Canadian Community Health Survey/ 2 PCO Communications Survey/ 3 HCP Survey/ 4 Canadian PSW Network Survey/ 5 EKOS Wave 17/ 6 COSMO Survey
The evolution of vaccine confidence since November 2020

Polling indicates that 15-17% of the general population say they are hesitant to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. **Strong resistors make up 6-9% of this population.**

We have made good ground on moveable middle but the resisters remain mainly unchanged.
Vaccine Confidence Across Time

'Y-Day': First COVID-19 vaccines administered in Canada

Health Canada approves Pfizer vaccine

Conspiracies are spreading over coronavirus vaccines before one even exists

Canada must ‘immunize’ public against misinformation before COVID-19 vaccine arrives: Tam

Ontario will no longer give AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine as 1st dose due to blood clot risk

Ontario expands COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to everyone 18 and up, starting Tuesday

COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence (Have received/intend to receive at least one dose)

Data from COVID Snapshot Monitoring Survey waves (COSMO)
Vaccine Confidence Strategy and Last Mile Plan

- Efforts aim to educate, engage, and empower Canadians to make confident vaccination decisions using evidence-based communications and program interventions
- Collaboration across jurisdictions and with external partners is critical to closing gaps in vaccine confidence

**General Population**
- Focused on build a **foundation of understanding and trust** in vaccines.

**Health Care Providers (HCPs)**
- Focused on ensuring **high levels of uptake** amongst HCPs – and equipping them to recommend and administer COVID-19 vaccines.

**Priority Populations for Vaccine Uptake**
- Identified and mapped hesitant or low uptake populations, targeting ways to increase confidence and remove barriers to access.

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**December to May**

- Maintain **high levels of confidence**.
- Ensure **clear and consistent messaging**.
- Engage Canadians to share their voice as social proof.

**June to December**

- Equip HCPs with information on evolving issues to support mass uptake.
- Deliver targeted communications and programming.
- Support PTs in removing barriers to access.
- Leverage community and industry/business partners.
- Target outreach to mobilize essential workplaces.
- Provide incentives for specific populations who may be resistant to or delayed in seeking and receiving vaccination.
What the Government of Canada is doing

✓ Introducing mandatory vaccination requirements for federal employees and federally regulated sectors to encourage vaccine uptake

✓ Producing specialized training, clinical guidance and information tools to support health care providers in recommending and administering COVID-19 vaccines

✓ Continuously developing public information, including web content on vaccine products and related topics as well as current and relevant materials available on PHAC and HC’s websites

✓ Supporting communities and innovative leaders in building vaccine confidence and increasing access to COVID-19 vaccines through grants and contributions programs, vaccine engagement sessions, stakeholder toolkits and vaccine engagement event in a box

✓ A “COVID-19 Vaccine and You” advertising campaign in market since March, targeting key priority populations (healthcare workers, seniors, Indigenous and racialized communities) and the general population with search engine marketing, out of home ads, digital ads, social media as well as print (targeting seniors and ethnic communities) and radio ads (targeting ethnic and Indigenous communities)

✓ Launching the “Ripple Effect” mass vaccination campaign to increase intentions to get vaccinated and influence others to do the same. The campaign included the tactics highlighted above with the addition of TV, digital, social media and digital engagement tactics (social proof and influence). The Ask an Expert series launched June with non-government experts speaking to vaccination

✓ Supporting collaborative communications partnerships to extend reach to various audience segments through services and tools frequently used and liked (e.g. Uber Eats, YMCA, ESAC, etc.)

✓ Supporting a unified approach to vaccine-specific communications in coordination with PTs to enhance the transparency and coherence of Canada’s messaging, and working to amplify trusted voices to drown out mis/disinformation
Federal Vaccine Confidence Programming - Late Summer/Early Fall 2021

“Rewards for Change” National Incentives Giveaway – Late Summer

- National sweepstakes with private sector ($500K in prizes available from close to 50 companies), in partnership with #ThisIsOurShot social media campaign. Launched Aug 11 to run until Labour Day
- Already high engagement; steady uptake of ~3,500 entries/day across all PTs, as well as positive coverage by major media outlets

Targeted Advertising and Public Education for priority populations – Late Summer/Early Fall

- Advertising campaign for Children & Vaccine Content for Parents
- Ask the Expert Public Education Campaign

Ramping up mandatory vaccination efforts – Early Fall

- Introduce federal proof of vaccination (PVC) requirements at borders and in federally regulated workplaces. To complement PT/private sector, and local initiatives

Immunization Partnership Fund (IPF) and Vaccine Community Innovation Challenge (VCIC) – Fall

- Initiate 70 new IPF projects to complement 31 already in the field
- Vaccine Community Innovation Challenge (VCIC) 20 Finalists for the VCIC submit their final project for judges in September to choose a winner of the challenge and a $100K prize

CPHO Outreach – Ongoing during the Fall

- Leveraging Dr. Tam’s platform via weekly pressers, weekly statements to address mis/disinformation about vaccines, profile IPF projects, encourage youth vaccination, and set ground with parents

Health Care Provider (HCP) Engagement – Ongoing during the Fall

- Guidance and resources for HCPs related to “booster” vaccinations, breakthrough COVID-19 infections and other emerging vaccine topics
- Webinars to equip healthcare providers to promote and mobilize uptake amongst youth, and set the ground with parents
- Monthly InfoBulletins for HCPs to promote resources and confidence with patients
What the provinces and territories are doing (examples)

Vaccine Mandates: Several provinces have announced **vaccination requirements** in a number of sectors, e.g. healthcare (ON, BC, QC, NB), education (ON)

Incentives: Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec have announced **lotteries** with the aim of increasing vaccine uptake. Prizes include cash, bursaries, event tickets, and outdoor activity passes and licences

Outreach and Removing Barriers (examples):
- **Across Canada**, provincial and territorial support for **Indigenous-run vaccination clinics** was important for increasing uptake in these communities by providing them with culturally-safe and appropriate venues and information for their vaccinations
- **Alberta** partnered with pharmacists and physicians to **call unvaccinated patients** to encourage uptake. Vaccinated students attending Alberta university eligible to win full tuition
- **British Columbia**, Vancouver specifically, offered **Downtown Eastside residents $5 for vaccinating**
- **Ontario** facilitated employer-based and community-run vaccination clinics. The High Priority Communities Strategy funds local agencies to deliver interventions, including **door-to-door outreach** and developing targeted and culturally appropriate communications
- **Saskatchewan** offered **drive-thru, mass walk-in clinics, and pop-up clinics** for COVID-19 vaccine in partnership with pharmacies and local communities
- **Manitoba** launched micro-campaigns to target Indigenous people and Mennonite communities to increase uptake, and are now branching out from their supersite vaccination clinics to pop-up and community-hosted clinics for wider reach
- **New Brunswick** provided **vaccination services to homebound individuals** 55 and older who were unable to leave their home to get vaccinated
- **Nova Scotia**, Cape Breton University specifically offered **cash draw prizes** up to $5000 to incentivize students to get vaccinated
- **Newfoundland** went to **marginalized, impoverished, home-bound populations with targeted interventions** including visiting individuals with mobility challenges and those with disabilities, and clinics for new Canadians with supportive interpretation services
- **Northwest Territories** set up **mobile clinics in high-traffic areas such as Walmart and Canadian Tire.** They partnered with FOXY – a northern sexual and mental health program – to promote confidential youth-led health decision-making including immunization
- **Nunavut** partnered with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to address vaccine hesitancy in Indigenous populations. They worked together to access populations with marketing and ad campaigns, and set up **mass vaccination clinics in Iqaluit staffed with Inuit nurses**
- **Quebec** - deployed mobile clinics in many cities, including the “**Vaccivan**” in **Montreal**, in areas of low uptake
- **Prince Edward Island** offered COVID-19 vaccinations to eligible youth via **school-based vaccination clinics**
- **Yukon** has engaged in a variety of vaccine roll-out strategies across the province, including using **mobile clinics to deliver vaccine to rural communities**