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Hawai'i Department of Health vaccination data confirms disparities, shows link between vaccination and mental health

HONOLULU – A recent Hawaii Department of Health-commissioned survey has confirmed the need to make vaccinations more accessible for those who face health and social disparities, and that getting vaccinated can contribute to a person's overall sense of mental well-being.

The survey was conducted among 482 adult Hawai'i full-time residents statewide to assess perceptions about COVID-19 from April 20, 2021 to May 3, 2021. Anthology Research has been tracking resident attitudes and behaviors relating to the pandemic on a regular basis since April 2020.

Overall, 68% of those polled have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Of the remainder, eight percent had scheduled an appointment to get vaccinated while another three percent indicating they will get vaccinated when it is available to them. Twelve percent will wait before getting vaccinated with 9% acknowledging they do not intend to get the vaccine.

Highlights of the survey showed that:

- Consistent with Hawaii's vaccination plan rollout, vaccination rates increase with age. Young adults under the age of 35 were the least likely to have been vaccinated at 55% while 92% of seniors say they have been vaccinated.
- Vaccination rates are lower among less-affluent households. Among those living in households of under \$50,000, 55% have received at least one dose of the vaccine. As a point of comparison, this number increases to 78% among those residing in homes with combined incomes exceeding \$100K.
- Among the major ethnic groups in the state, Japanese (71%) and Caucasian (68%) respondents were more likely to be fully vaccinated than were Native Hawaiians (49%) and Filipinos (40%).
- More educated segments of the sample or those with a college degree (75%) were more likely to be fully vaccinated than were those without a degree (47%).

The survey also showed an association between vaccinations and mental health:

- Those who are vaccinated feel more optimistic than do those who are not vaccinated. The survey showed 51% of those who are vaccinated provided a score ranging from seven to 10 on an optimism scale. This number drops to 35% among those who are not vaccinated.
- Those who have been vaccinated view the pandemic more in terms of its health impact while those who have not been vaccinated view the pandemic more in financial terms. Of those polled, 42% who have not been vaccinated think of the pandemic more for its financial impact on the household. The number of vaccinated respondents who feel the same falls to 19%.

For a summary of the survey results, visit HawaiiCOVID19.com/TrackingStudy.

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