



COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Survey for the Montreal Filipino Diaspora – Key Findings

September 2021

This report covers key findings from a survey entitled the *COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Survey for the Montreal Filipino Diaspora*, developed by the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) in partnership with the Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs (FAMAS), PINAY Quebec and Migrante Quebec, and funded by the WES Mariam Assefa Fund. The major aim of the survey instrument was to collect information on the Filipino diaspora's attitudes and perceptions surrounding the COVID-19 virus and vaccination process.

The surveys were launched between mid-July and mid-August, 2021. The survey and its findings make up the initial research and needs assessment phase of the six-month project, in which a science communications campaign will be specifically tailored *with and for* Filipino Montrealers in order to address concerns about vaccination safety, help communicate updated information about local guidelines and safety measures, and more. The project began in the summer of 2021 and is ongoing until December, 2021.

There were two collection methods: online, and printed. Both versions were available in English and Tagalog. The online survey was hosted on Survey Monkey, while the printed survey was shared within the community through the help of the project partners, FAMAS, PINAY Quebec and Migrante Quebec. The FAMAS Centre on Van Horne Street in Montreal was the official collection point for survey pick-up and drop-off.

A valid sample of 582 was obtained through these methods. The data was disaggregated according to the collection method, and the following identity markers: by age, sex student status, occupation, employment status, and household size. Sample findings of key demographics follow.

While 74% of respondents who completed the printed survey were 40 years of age and older, 79% of those who completed the online survey were between 25 to 50 years old. Students accounted for 26% of online respondents, and 13% of respondents who completed printed surveys. 64% of all respondents were female and 54% of all respondents indicated that they worked full-time. In terms of household details, 19% noted that they lived with 5 people or more including themselves, and 32% of respondents said they have children under 18 years of age residing at home. Respondents identified English as the language they felt most comfortable conducting a conversation in, especially according to those who completed the online version, at 84%.

In terms of social media usage, the majority of respondents reported that they used Facebook, YouTube and messaging applications in general, at least once a day (67%, 62% and 66%, respectively). Respondents were also asked where they would go first to access public health information, for example, information about COVID-19. Accessing both government websites and mainstream media



were preferred over other options, such as “word of mouth”, “workplace” or “religious organizations”. Online survey respondents were more likely to indicate that they would turn to social media or Filipino community organizations than those who filled out printed copies. Online survey responses were twice as likely to say they would consult social media first at 18%, compared to 8% of the latter.

With regards to COVID-19 vaccination coverage, there was a difference in validity of numbers in terms of the survey’s methodologies. Related to vaccine coverage *only*, responses for those who completed the printed survey could not be considered valid and representative for the entirety of Montreal’s Filipino diaspora for two reasons. Firstly, the sample is significantly older than the sample of those who completed the survey online, and older people are more likely to be vaccinated. Secondly, those who completed printed surveys were likely to be in closer proximity of community partners, and could potentially be more likely to be vaccinated.

Correspondingly, the printed survey sample had a very high vaccination rate compared to all Montrealers, with a single-dose vaccination rate of 97% compared to 75%, respectively. In considering the online survey respondents, however, 51% of them said they were fully vaccinated, compared to 61% of all Montrealers. In this sample, it is useful to keep in mind that these respondents tended to be younger as well. Overall, 28% of the youngest respondents (between the ages of 25-29 years old) had not received their first vaccine yet. Students were also slightly less likely to be vaccinated compared to non-students.

Other findings related to COVID-19 vaccination coverage are as follows. Those who were retired had the highest vaccination coverage; those who lived alone as well as those in households with five people or more including themselves were more likely to be vaccinated; and those who believed that vaccines to be dangerous were much less likely to get vaccinated than the others. There was no significant difference in vaccination rates between males and females.

Respondents were asked about their level of fear of contracting the virus. The majority of respondents said that they were very or somewhat afraid of contracting COVID-19, and this was especially true for those who completed the printed survey. Females aged 60 years and older were more afraid of contracting the virus than other groups. Less than a third of student respondents (30%) said that they were very afraid, while 55% of caregivers said so. When looking at employment status and levels of fear, those who were retired said that they were very afraid, at 66%. Nearly 20% of those working full-time reported that were not very afraid, or not afraid at all.

When asked whether they personally believed that vaccines were dangerous and should not be taken or given, 71% of all respondents said no. However, there was a significant difference between those who completed printed versus online surveys; 4% of the former said they believed vaccines were dangerous, compared to 25% of the latter. Males were more likely than females to say they thought that vaccines were dangerous.

Interestingly, while 43% of respondents between the ages of 25-29 years old who completed both the print and online surveys believed the vaccines to be dangerous, 57% of the same group had taken at least one dose of the vaccine. Also, while nearly 100% of people in the caregiving profession said that



they had received a least one dose, and 26% of them said they were waiting for their second dose at the time of the survey, 24% said that they didn't know if vaccines were actually safe or not.

With regards to perceptions of the vaccine's safety for children and teenagers aged between 12-17 years old, the majority of respondents said they thought it was safe—especially amongst online survey respondents (70%) as well as respondents who said that they had children under 18 years of age at home living with them (70%). Nearly one third (29%) of caregivers said that they were unsure whether vaccines were safe for children and teenagers under 17 years of age.

Respondents were asked a question surrounding self-reported knowledge about the COVID-19 vaccines. Over half of all respondents said they felt somewhat knowledgeable about the vaccines, while 28% said that they felt very knowledgeable. Respondents were also asked about the type of *additional* information they would like to know about COVID-19 vaccines. Most indicated that they wished to know more about side effects (20%), as well as the effectiveness/efficiency of vaccines (13%). 8% of respondents wanted to know about the possibility of “booster” shots or the eventual need for more than two doses.

Also related to perception, respondents were asked whether they agreed with a battery of statements (some positive and some negative) related to COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccination process (Table 1). The majority of respondents, particularly 70% of online respondents, agreed that we “don't really know the long-term effects of the COVID-19 vaccines.” Overall, online respondents were nearly twice as likely to say that they agreed with the statements. Age-wise, the youngest respondents (between 25-29 years old) were likely to agree with the presented statements, while the 60-69 age group was least likely to do so. Those in the caregiving profession tended to answer more optimistically than other respondents.

Table 1- Respondents' perception of COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccination process

Do you agree with the following statements? (% Agree)	Printed survey	Online survey	Total
We don't really know the long-term effects of the COVID-19 vaccines	54.0%	70.3%	58.0%
The safety of the COVID-19 vaccines has not been adequately tested	23.0%	53.1%	30.5%
The side effects caused by the COVID-19 vaccines could be dangerous to my health	24.1%	39.8%	28.0%
COVID-19 is not dangerous to my health	21.3%	38.3%	25.3%
I am afraid that I will lose wages due to the COVID-19 vaccine related side-effects	8.9%	42.2%	17.5%
I am concerned about jeopardizing my legal status in Canada if I show up to a vaccination clinic	8.4%	29.7%	13.8%
Vaccines are not effective against COVID-19	7.5%	28.1%	12.6%
I can't afford to take time off from work to get vaccinated.	4.7%	32.0%	11.6%
There are so many people who will be vaccinated that I don't need to be vaccinated myself	4.2%	27.3%	9.9%
Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine goes against the values of my religious group	2.0%	21.1%	6.7%

Source: The COVID-19 Vaccine equity survey for the Filipino Diaspora

Lastly, respondents were presented with a battery of hypothetical statements and asked whether these scenarios would mean that they might be more likely to be vaccinated (Table 2). It is important to note that these questions were asked before certain governmental measures and restrictions were announced to be implemented. 57% of respondents said they would be more likely to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if they could choose the vaccine brand, 44% said they would be more likely to if they could not travel outside of Canada without proof of vaccination, and 33% said it would be dependent on not being able to attend social gatherings without proof of vaccination. Regarding access to trustworthy information about the vaccine, 13% of online respondents agreed that this would make them more likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 41% of online respondents.



Table 2- Would you be more likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine if...

Would you be more likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine if...	Printed survey	Online survey	Total
You could choose which brand of vaccine you get (e.g. Pfizer, Moderna, AZ)	62.9%	37.5%	56.5%
You could not travel outside of Canada without proof of vaccination	43.7%	43.0%	43.5%
You could not attend social gatherings without proof of vaccination	32.3%	33.6%	32.6%
Walk in vaccination clinics were more accessible	28.5%	29.7%	28.8%
The COVID-19 vaccine registration system was easier to navigate	26.4%	18.8%	24.5%
Wearing masks would no longer be required	20.3%	28.1%	22.3%
You could not work without proof of vaccination	20.3%	26.6%	21.9%
You had more access to trustworthy scientific information about vaccine safety and side effects	12.5%	41.4%	19.9%
You received an incentive to get vaccinated (e.g. money, gift, etc.)	5.6%	25.8%	10.7%
You did not have to provide any official identification (ie: RAMQ ID) in order to get a vaccine	4.5%	18.8%	8.2%
Other (please specify)	1.6%	4.7%	2.4%

Source: The COVID-19 Vaccine equity survey for the Filipino Diaspora

The ACS acknowledges and thanks FAMAS, Migrante Quebec and Pinay Quebec for their work in outreach and facilitating the survey completion process within the Montreal Filipino diaspora.