

February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021



Mia Bell  
COVID Recovery Coordinator  
[Mia.bell@nrmedd.org](mailto:Mia.bell@nrmedd.org)  
406-823-9849

### Advisory #42

## What Do We Know About Those Who Want to “Wait and See” Before Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine?

If you tuned in to hear Dr. Fauci’s COVID conversation hosted by the Mansfield Center, you likely noted that there were several mentions of vaccine hesitancy and misinformation around the vaccine. With the current vaccine supply exceeding demand, it may be difficult to recognize any meaningful shortfall in uptake. We have heard that in the first round of vaccines in long term care facilities, uptake was at 50%. It was also reported this week, that Lewis and Clark County is estimating that only 50% of their 70+ year old population is signing up for the vaccine, leaving them to consider moving into the next phase sooner than later.

In a conversation I had with Dr. Marshall Bloom a couple weeks ago, he thought that the younger population might be more inclined to be hesitant as a generation that didn’t experience the Polio epidemic and successful vaccination program. We’ll be able to discuss hesitancy and vaccine misinformation more with Dr. Bloom when he joins our call on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

You can read the January [KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor](#) report at this link. The report shares that 31% of the public say that when an FDA-approved vaccine for COVID-19 is available to them for free, they will “wait until it has been available for a while to see how it is working for other people” before getting vaccinated themselves. ***This “wait and see” group is an important target for outreach and messaging, since they express some hesitancy about getting vaccinated, but will likely be much easier to convert from vaccine-hesitant to vaccine-acceptant than those who say they will “definitely not” get the vaccine or will get it “only if required” to do so.*** Those in the “wait and see” category express high levels of concern about the safety and long-term effects of COVID-19 vaccines as well as a desire for more information about vaccine side effects and effectiveness. Most adults in this group (60%) do not yet know someone who’s been vaccinated for COVID-19, presenting an opportunity for them to learn more as more of their friends and family members get vaccinated.

As we hear more about the need to vaccinate the vast majority of the population to reach herd immunity, and expediency in the process being key to getting ahead of the variants, I thought this was a timely and helpful report to consider in developing communication strategies to this hesitant group.