healthwatch Cheshire West

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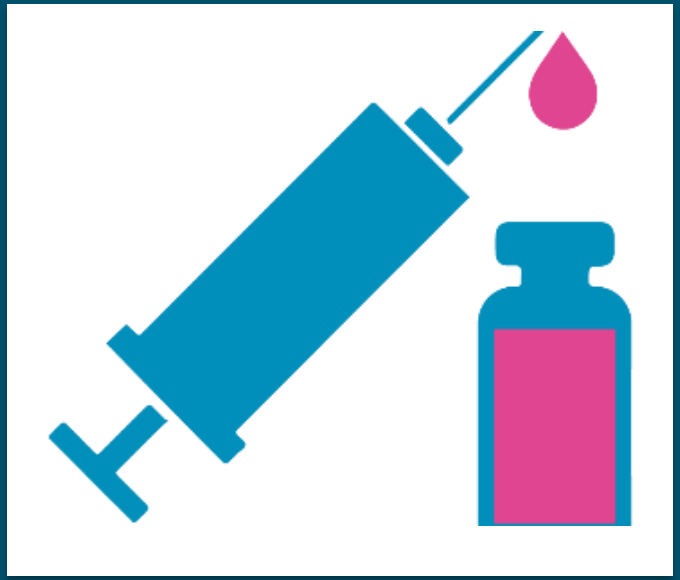
Views of 18-30 year-olds on COVID-19 vaccinations

June-July 2021



Introduction

Healthwatch Cheshire have been keen to find out the opinions and experiences on the COVID-19 vaccination for people living in the Cheshire area aged between 18-30 years old.

Anecdotally, we've were told that there could be some hesitation amongst some people in this age group to get vaccinated, and as they are the current cohort eligible for their vaccination, it is useful to explore their views on the vaccine. This enables us to feed back people's views and perceptions to those organising the COVID-19 vaccination process, in order to influence the messaging used in encouraging people to take up their vaccine.

Where people between 18-30 have already accessed their vaccine, we wanted to find our about their experience of the process, and their thoughts prior to getting their vaccine. By giving people the opportunity to share their views and experiences in this survey this helped us to gain a better understanding of what is going well, what could be improved and people's views on the COVID-19 vaccination process. The survey could be completed anonymously, and all comments are being used to influence the planning of the vaccination programme going forward.

We encouraged anybody aged 18-30, or anyone who knows somebody who is, to fill in our survey.

The survey had a quick turnaround of two weeks in order to provide timely information to those planning the vaccination programme. We received **130 responses** between 22 June and 6 July 2021.

Summary of findings

Who responded to our survey

- 130 responses to our survey
- 48 people didn't answer our demographics and characteristics questions.
- Of those that did, there was a fairly even split between the number of 18-25-year-olds and 26-30-year-olds responding.
- Respondents were predominantly female, with 50 women compared to 28 men.

Vaccine uptake

- 126 of 130 respondents had been offered the vaccine at the time of taking the survey.
- Out of 97 people who answered, 91 said had either had their first dose or intended to. 49 had had their second dose and 48 intended to.
- Positive comments included wanting to protect others, to feel less anxious about Covid, and a desire to get back to normal. Work or academic life also had a strong connection with getting vaccinated.
- The majority of people told us that they most trusted the NHS and health and care professionals as reliable sources for information about the vaccine.
- 21 of 130 people told us they did not want to have the vaccine or were unsure. Reasons include (full comments on slides 7 and 8):
    - Phobia of needles.
    - Sentiment that the risks of the vaccine outweigh the benefits as some in this age group don't feel particularly at risk.
    - Not enough information on short and long-term side effects, such as on fertility and pregnancy.
    - Sentiment that the vaccine is still in a trial phase.

Summary of findings cont.

Booking vaccine appointments

- The vast majority booked their vaccine after initially being contacted.
- The majority said they had been contacted by text or letter. 72% said that they had then booked their vaccination online through the NHS website.
- 85% of people who had booked their vaccine told us it was an easy process. Those who had difficulties cited the availability of appointments to fit around work, not knowing their NHS number, and having to book both doses at once despite a lack of availability for their second dose as it was so far in the future.
- If given the choice, the most popular venues people would choose to receive their vaccine are a vaccination centre, GP Practice, pharmacy, or walk-in centre.

Experiences of the vaccine process

- Just over half of people who had had their vaccine had received the Pfizer vaccine, and just over a quarter had received AstraZeneca.
- Most people told us about friendly and welcoming staff, who looked after them well. People generally felt that they experienced a short waiting time and accessibility, both to and on the site of their vaccination was good.
- Some people told us that their experience was negatively effected by the logistics of getting a vaccine, such as parking, feeling that they waited a little too long to receive their vaccine, or appointments being far away.
- A small number of people reported pain, swelling or feeling unwell after their second dose of the vaccine.

Survey Results

Results - Have you been offered the COVID-19 Vaccination?

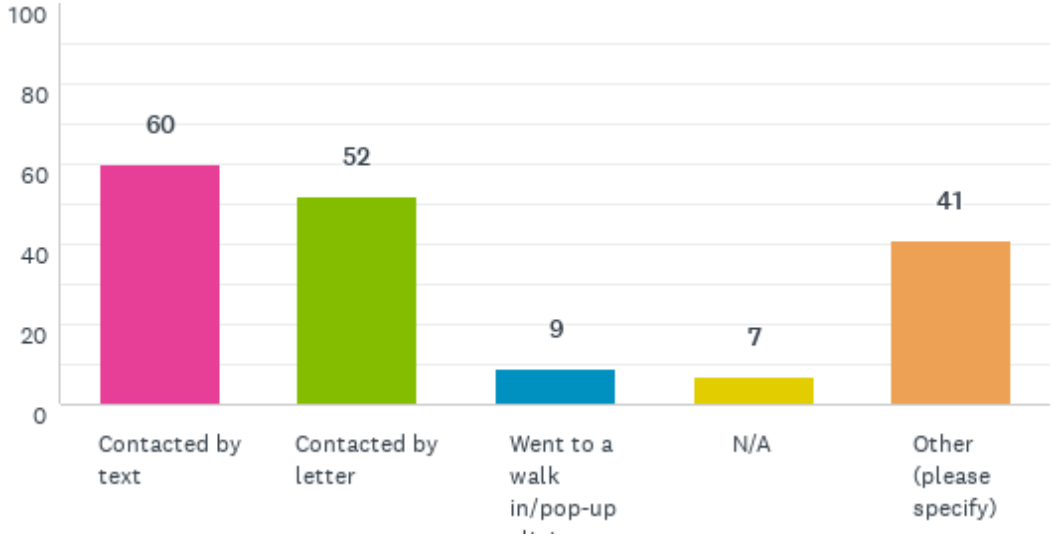
Answered: 130 Skipped: 0

97%
of 18-30 year olds

126 out of 130 respondents
to this question
have been offered their first
Covid-19 vaccination

If Yes, please select the method you were contacted by:

Answered: 130 Skipped: 0



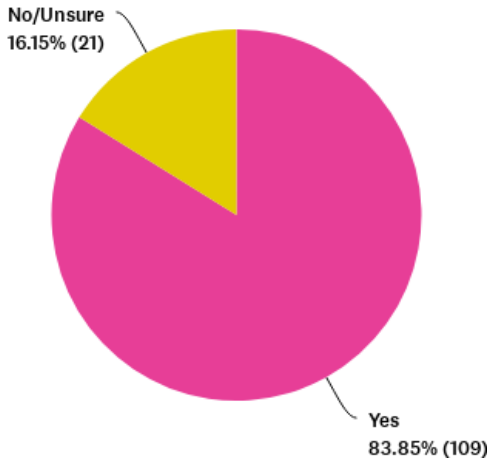
Many people that we asked indicated that they had been offered the opportunity to get vaccinated through work, with some being in the health sector or in a caring role. A few people told us they had been contacted by their university or through a volunteering role. Most said that they had then booked their vaccination online through the NHS website. Work or academic life had a strong connection with getting vaccinated, within the responses to our survey.

Are you going to, or have you had the vaccine? If no or unsure please say why.

Answered: 130 Skipped: 0

Below are some of the reasons people told us they were unsure about being vaccinated:

- *"Severe medical/needle phobia."*
- *"Don't feel like you should be forced to have something you don't want to have."*
- *"I've had my first vaccine but it was only after hearing about a pop-up clinic from a family member, I'd had no request or invite for the vaccine."*
- *"Not sure as worried about the effect on my health and wellbeing. Taking regular home test."*
- *"The risk of the jab far outweighs the benefits to someone at my age."*
- *"Not enough about side affects - Fertility, Pregnancy."*
- *"Because is a trial phase vaccine and I don't want any health problem in the future because nobody knows what are the long term symptoms. By the way my immune system is 100% strong against this virus."*
- *"Cannot get an appointment close to me (and cannot travel) as I require a British Sign Language interpreter, the closest vaccination centre with this is 40+ miles away. I'm also concerned about how this affects reproductive health as women's reports of changes to cycles is being ignored and I am trying to get pregnant."*

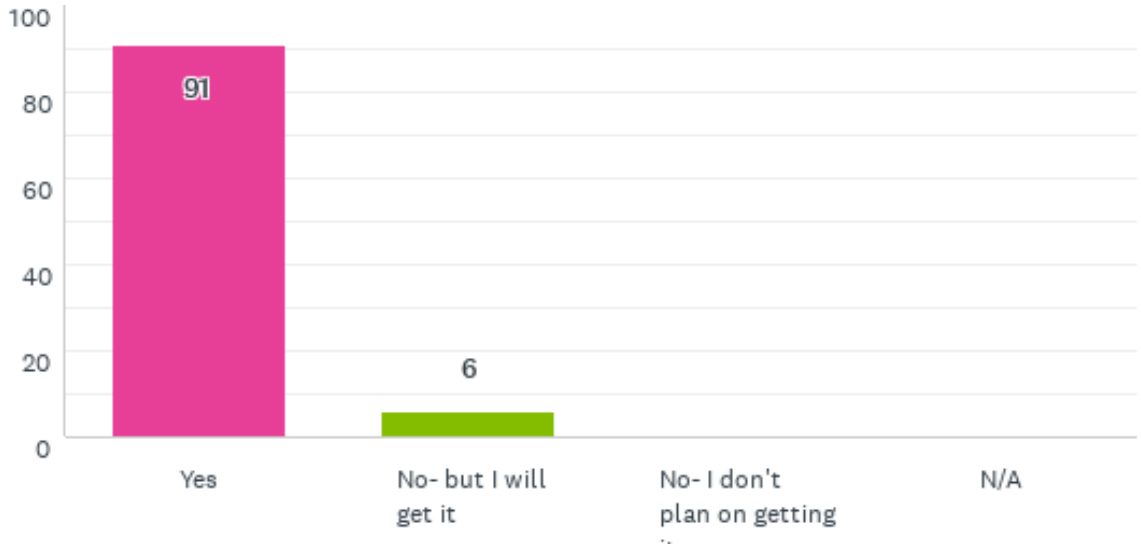


Are you going to, or have you had the vaccine? If no or unsure please say why. cont.

- *"Reports of infertility, messed up menstrual cycles and heart attacks."*
- *"Unsure on the safety of the vaccine."*
- *"No evidence of long term side effects. New technology never been used before. Pfizer never had vaccine approved before. Risk management, risks of covid side effects vs vaccine side effects in younger age groups."*
- *"It's an experimental vaccine still in trials. No long term effects are known. Its already causing death and serious damage."*
- *"Unsure about the effects when having it in the future."*
- *"No long term safety data."*
- *"Experimental vaccine? No thanks."*
- *"I do not want the vaccine. I am extremely unconfident of the short term and especially the long term effects of the MRNA vaccine."*
- *"I am pregnant."*
- *"Don't like needles."*
- *"Due to side-effects (heart inflammation re Pfizer and blood clots re AZ and menstrual irregularities re both amongst others), I have had this very variant of the virus that these vaccines are made for (it was milder than a normal cold) and I do not consider myself in a risk group. In the States they have monitored spinal fluids and found everyone who has had the virus to retain the antibodies in their spinal fluid, so the immunity is there even if it's not circulating in the blood. In addition, I believe that the more the virus is curtailed, the more it mutates in order to survive, so it would be best to allow it to circulate amongst the young and healthy while vaccinating all the vulnerable and elderly people effectively and fully."*

Have you had the first dose of the vaccine?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 33

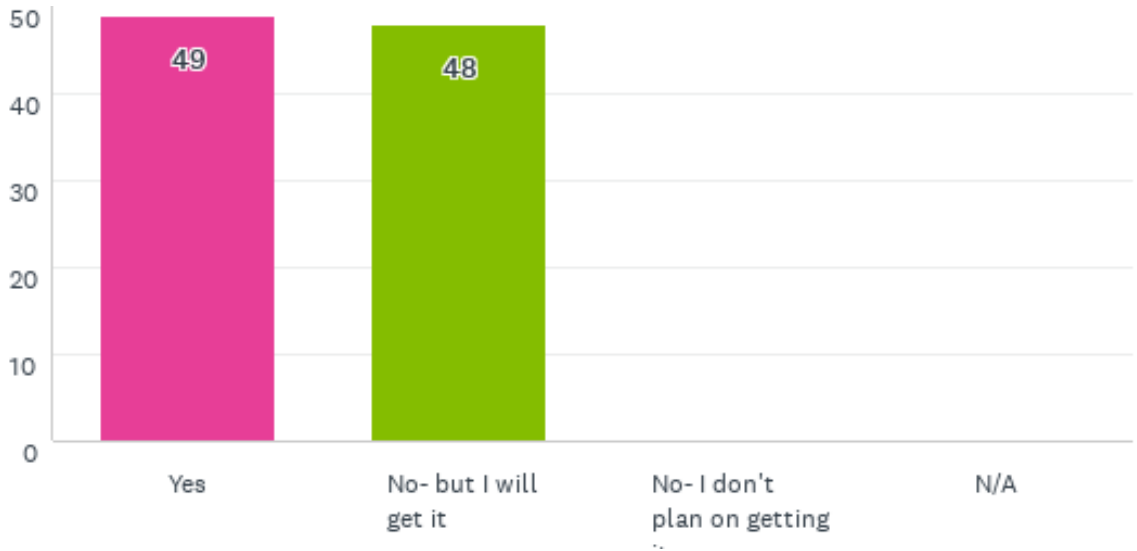


93%

Of respondents to this question had already had their first dose of the vaccine

Have you had the second dose of the vaccine?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 33



50%

of respondents to this question had already had their second dose of the vaccine, and the other 50% intend to

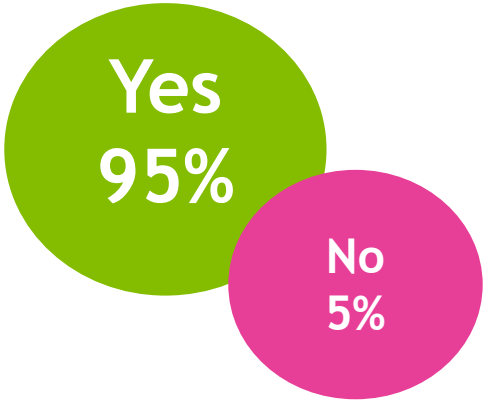
Which vaccine have you had?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 33

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
AstraZeneca	28.87%	28
Pfizer	58.76%	57
Moderna	6.19%	6
Novavax	0.00%	0
Johnson & Johnson	0.00%	0
N/A	5.15%	5
Other (please specify)	1.03%	1
TOTAL		97

Did you take up the offer of the vaccine when first contacted?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 33



89 out of 97
respondents to this question booked their COVID-19 vaccination when first contacted

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	91.75%	89
No- I waited until I had been contacted a couple of times	3.09%	3
No- I have still not booked my vaccine	0.00%	0
N/A	5.15%	5
TOTAL		97

Did you find the process of booking a vaccine easy? If no, why not?

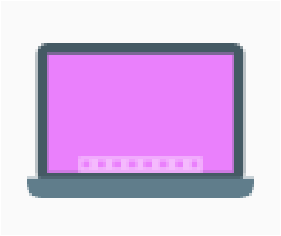
Answered: 97 Skipped: 33

Below are some of the reasons people told us booking a vaccination was *not* an easy process:

- *"There wasn't many appointments to fit my vaccine around work."*
- *"I couldn't get an appointment in Cheshire West at all, very bad. Went to Warrington."*
- *"I didn't know my NHS number. Was fine once I had got it from GP."*
- *"The first few times I tried to book, it kept cancelling as you have to book both appointments at the same time, but the date of my second dose was so far in advance that they didn't have any dates available yet."*
- *"It took a while to get an appointment near me."*
- *"Places far away."*
- *"There was nothing available locally."*

How did you book your vaccine?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 33



NHS 111

72% of respondents

booked their COVID-19 vaccination Online

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Online	72.16%	70
Telephone - 111	0.00%	0
Telephone - GP	8.25%	8
N/A	5.15%	5
Other (please specify)	14.43%	14
TOTAL		97

What was your experience of having a vaccine?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 34

92%

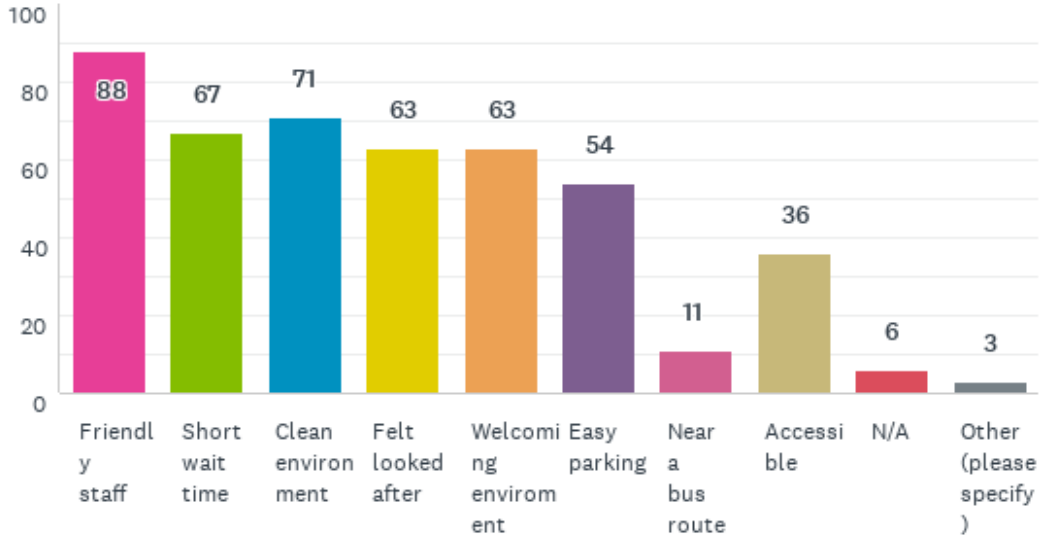
told us they had a positive experience of receiving their vaccine

Most people told us about the friendly and welcoming staff, who looked after them well. People generally felt that they experienced a short waiting time and accessibility, both to and on the site of their vaccination was good.

Some people told us that their experience was negatively affected by the logistics of getting a vaccine. For example, parking on site, not having a full understanding of the arrangements or feeling that they waited a little too long to receive their vaccine.

A small number of people reported pain, swelling or feeling unwell after their second dose of the vaccine.

If positive, please tick all that apply



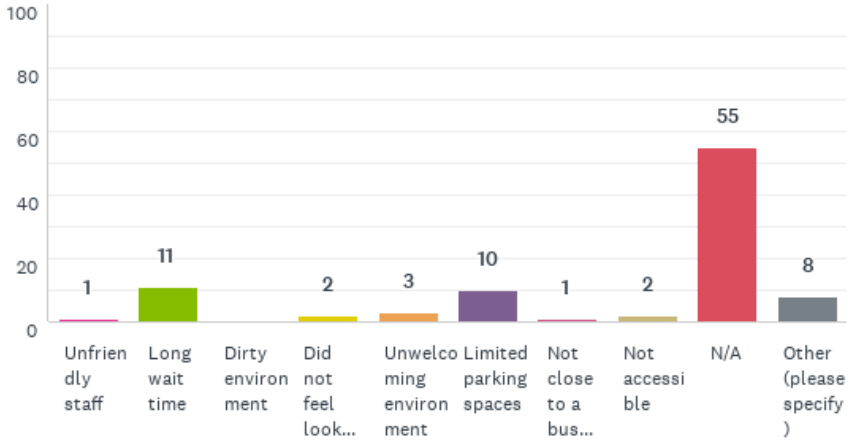
People who responded 'Other' stated:

- *"All vaccination staff members were very friendly."*
- *"Had my first vaccine at Ellesmere Port last Friday. So friendly and I didn't even realise it has been done as a nervous person."*
- *"Originally I had to book my 1st jab in Liverpool 16 miles away. A few days later a work colleague said they had booked in Chester so I amended my booking. But it would have been better if the site was up to date when you made 30-year-olds live."*

If negative, please tell us why?

People who responded 'Other' stated:

- *"Not accessible - ground underfoot to the vaccination centre isn't ideal for someone who isn't stable under foot."*
- *"Unwelcoming environment - I was advised for my 2nd dose to go into the actual GP Practice yet the lady behind reception was very passive and told me they didn't do vaccines there without even asking any of my information. Long story-short, I did have a vaccination booked in at the surgery."*
- *"Second dose was a long wait time."*
- *"Limited wheelchair accessibility."*
- *"Far away."*
- *"Despite having an appointment booked for 1.20pm, they were running a 'drop in' on the same day. There was no distinction between the two groups so I ended up waiting for an hour for my pre-booked appointment. I did not feel this was very good and appointments should have been honoured with walk ins slotted in where they could. Poor planning."*
- *"Felt really ill after the first dose and needed time off 6th form."*
- *"Painful second injection."*
- *"17 mile trip to Liverpool if I was not told the site had been updated."*



If you could have a choice of vaccination centre, where would you pick?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

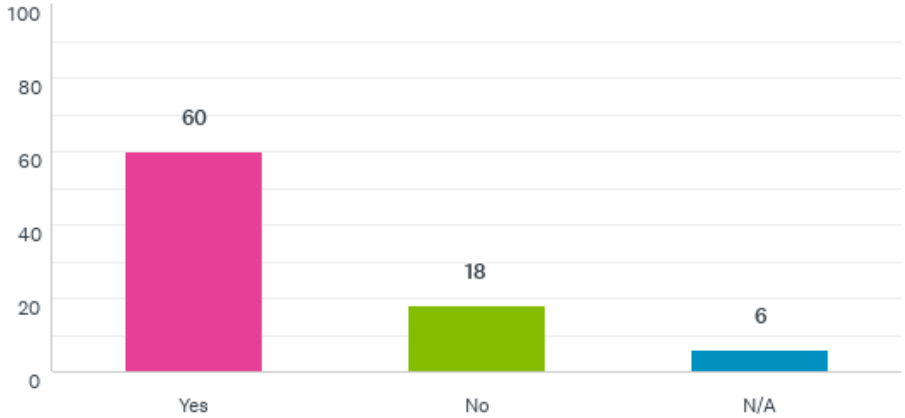
The majority of people indicated that they would like their vaccination to be in a familiar local setting, such as their local GP, pharmacy or walk-in centre. However, many were happy with the common option of attending a focused, larger site, such as vaccination centres. Timing and availability was very important to respondents. 'Other' response included:

- *"Nearest location to me."*
- *"Anywhere!"*
- *"Just whichever option is closest to my home or workplace."*
- *"Would always pick the one with the earliest appointment available, doesn't bother me where, expect I'd avoid a hospital."*
- *"I feel the GP surgeries in Chester have been a disgrace during covid and let us all down They could and should have done so much. And in this day and age people should be able to book GP and nurse appointments online and there should be weekend and at least 1 evening surgery till 10pm."*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Pharmacy	36.59%	30
Doctors' surgery	39.02%	32
Walk-in Centres'	34.15%	28
Education setting (School/College/University)	18.29%	15
Hospital	20.73%	17
Youth/Community/Leisure centre	13.41%	11
Vaccination Centre	46.34%	38
Pop up sites (e.g Vaccine bus, empty shops in town, park, Mosques, supermarket car parks)	25.61%	21
N/A	13.41%	11
Other (please specify)	10.98%	9
Total Respondents: 82		

Were you or are you looking forward to getting your vaccine? Please say why.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



- *"Severe medical/needle phobia."*
- *"Lots of mystery behind the facts on the news."*
- *"Get back to normality."*
- *"Excited to protect others."*
- *"Nervous with Needles."*
- *"Starting to get back to normal."*
- *"So I can do things that require two vaccines."*
- *"Eager to get back to normal life and see loved ones."*
- *"Concerned of the side effects."*
- *"Reduces the risk of me getting severe symptoms."*
- *"To help protect myself and resume back to some normality."*
- *"To get it all over with. I feel that the more people that are vaccinated, the quicker things can get back to normal."*
- *"To have peace of mind that I will be much less likely to contract Covid and pass it on to anybody, and that if I do happen to contract it, it is unlikely that I will become seriously ill. Also gives the opportunity to get the world back to normal."*
- *"I don't like vaccines however if it means we can let life go back to normal then I would like to have one sooner rather than later."*
- *"I'm vulnerable and wanted to be able to meet friends and family safely."*
- *"Side effects aren't fun. I didn't care too much but I wasn't thrilled for them."*
- *"Want improved protection from the virus."*

Were you or are you looking forward to getting your vaccine? Please say why. Cont.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *“Makes travel easier!”*
- *“There has been a lot of speculation about the long term effects, to which I'm still nervous about.”*
- *“Finally get to the end of Covid and lockdowns. Have my freedom back.”*
- *“Closer to things returning back to normal, playing my part.”*
- *“It’s all about the money.”*
- *“Scared to death affected my ocd.”*
- *“Immune system is enough.”*
- *“Couldn't wait to be protected.”*
- *“Personal protection from Covid.”*
- *“Protecting the patients I care for.”*
- *“Getting closer to getting back to normal.”*
- *“To help stop the spread and protect myself and my family and friends.”*
- *“I understand why it is vital that everyone is vaccinated.”*
- *“Gives me peace of mind.”*
- *“Necessary to reopen the country.”*
- *“I wanted to protect myself and those around me.”*
- *“It'll be out of the way on my to do list.”*
- *“To keep myself, clients and family safe.”*
- *“Feel much safer and can look forward to going back to some normality.”*
- *“I want to feel protected and help protect those around me.”*

Were you or are you looking forward to getting your vaccine? Please say why. Cont.

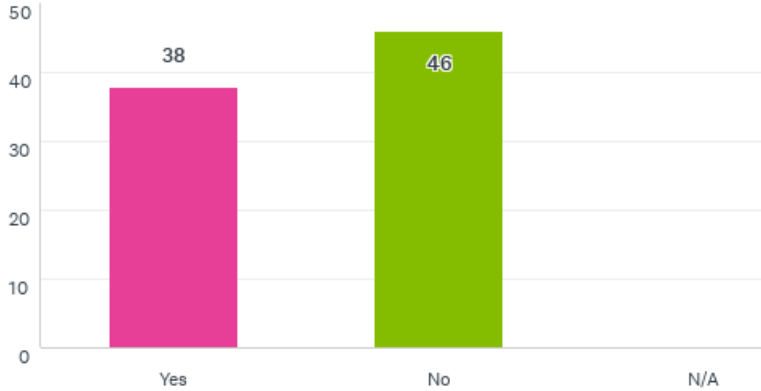
Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *“FREEDOM”*
- *“To protect myself and my family, and help get life back to normal.”*
- *“I was excited to get the vaccine to help limit the spread of infection, protect those at risk and bring life back to normality.”*
- *“It's an experimental vaccine still in trials.”*
- *“So we could get out of lockdown quicker and protect those around me.”*
- *“Not concerned about getting COVID (already had it April 2020 with minimal affects). Just want to get it to protect everyone else.”*
- *“No long term safety data, feels like there is no choice and being forced into it, the amount of government propaganda is bizarre.”*
- *“Looking forward to feeling safer about Covid.”*
- *“It's our way out of this awful situation. I want my life back.”*
- *“I want to protect myself and others from the virus.”*
- *“I think as many people as possible should have it because it may stop or slow down the spread.”*
- *“I am an unpaid carer.”*
- *“I was not afraid of death but of getting long covid and not living a normal life.”*
- *“Return to normality.”*

Were you or are you worried about getting the vaccine? Please say why.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *“Nothing against the Covid-19 vaccination, I worry about all vaccinations.”*
- *“Severe medical/needle phobia.”*
- *“Lots of myths online regarding the unknown effects on the female menstrual cycle and fertility.”*
- *“I had my vaccines just as the issues with blood clots hit, and there was a lot of misinformation.”*
- *“Needles.”*
- *“Unknown.”*
- *“Concerns over future health implications eg. impact on pregnancies in future?”*
- *“I was marginally worried about side effects.”*
- *“Not really, but naturally wary of having a vaccine so recently developed - but would never have turned it down.”*
- *“As I have an autoimmune condition I was worried how my body would react.”*
- *“I was worried about side effects, but I am fine.”*
- *“Concerned about how it would interact with my health conditions.”*
- *“Long term effects unknown.”*
- *“Side effects.”*
- *“Efficiency of vaccine.”*
- *“Worried about side effects.”*

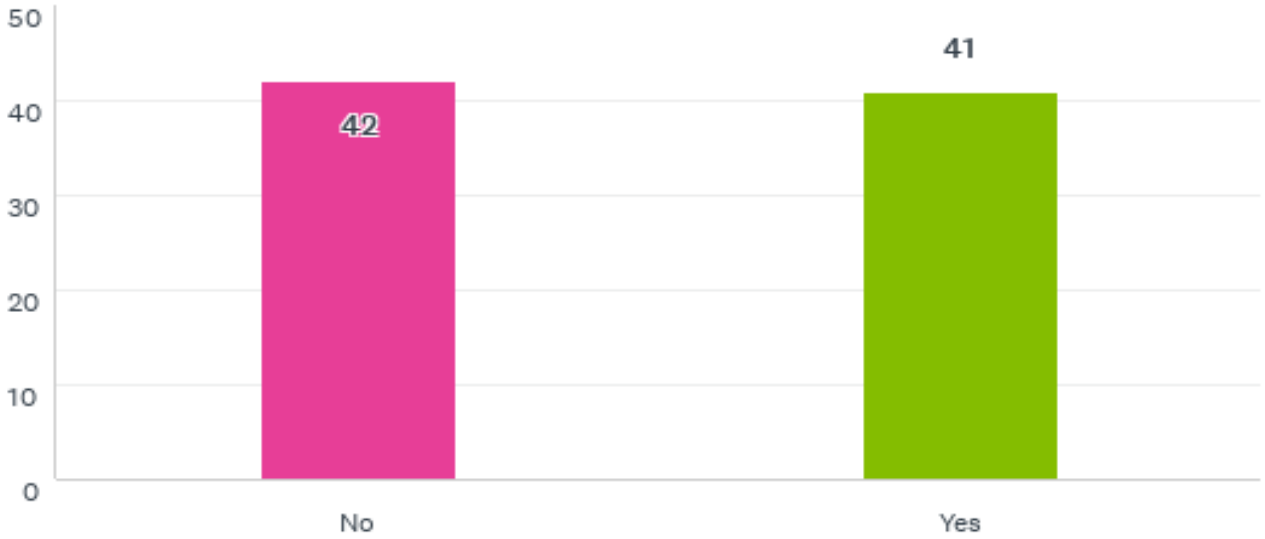


Were you or are you worried about getting the vaccine? Please say why. Cont.

- *“I trust the people to made the vaccine.”*
- *“I'm not getting it - vaccine passports next.”*
- *“Not enough about it.”*
- *“Side effects, what is in the vaccine.”*
- *“Because I never get, I don't need.”*
- *“I trust the science and wanted protection.”*
- *“Confident in medical professionals.”*
- *“The benefits outweigh the risks.”*
- *“Members of my family had some bad side effects and I'm concerned I'll have a similar reaction.”*
- *“Concerned about fertility but chose to trust the system.”*
- *“Total faith in all parties involved.”*
- *“Just the standard fear of pain from the needles/injection, nothing major.”*
- *“Lots of scaremongering.”*
- *“It's an experimental vaccine killing healthy people.”*
- *“It’s the right thing to do, shouldn't be worried about the right thing to do.”*
- *“Concerned about reports of Myocarditis with MRNA vaccines.”*
- *“No long-term safety data.”*
- *“People are being injured by the vaccine on a daily basis and the long term effects are going to be catastrophic.”*
- *“Short-term side effects and long-term unknown side effects.”*
- *“I know there is a very small safety risk but we need to get back to a more environment. The current restrictions are affecting some peoples mental health and adversely impacting the local and national economy.”*
- *“I have anxiety around medical procedures and have previously fainted after vaccinations.”*
- *“I do not trust the lying PM or Hancock but I have faith in the scientists.”*
- *“Bit concerned about all the ‘conspiracy theories, and how it apparently can make you infertile’, although I know its not supported it is still a concern.”*

Have you done any research regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine? If Yes, Please state where you found your information.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



Have you done any research regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine? If Yes, Please state where you found your information.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *"Research papers, Gov.uk website, Google search."*
- *"E-learning for health degree'."*
- *"Healthwatch."*
- *"Medical Journals and reputable news sources."*
- *"NHS Choices, Gov.uk website, WHO, Pfizer, University of Oxford."*
- *"I was concerned about future pregnancy implications, so I went on the Royal College of Midwifery among other sites."*
- *"Online, TV, Newspapers, School, family."*
- *"Independent research, but on reputable sites, no conspiracy nonsense."*
- *"CDC, WHO, BMJ publications."*

How would you prefer to find out about information regarding the Vaccine?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
TV	42.68%	35
Radio	23.17%	19
Social Media	42.68%	35
Posters/Leaflets	39.02%	32
Other (please specify)	31.71%	26
Total Respondents: 82		

How would you prefer to find out about information regarding the Vaccine?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *“ Anywhere - If it is backed up by evidence.”*
- *“ Emails, websites.”*
- *“Academic sources.”*
- *“People’s experiences.”*
- *“I prefer to search for websites I can trust.”*
- *“Information from the NHS directly.”*
- *“Being contacted by GP or vaccine service. There is no clear information about the pop-up centres near me.”*
- *“Independent research.”*
- *“Text messages.”*

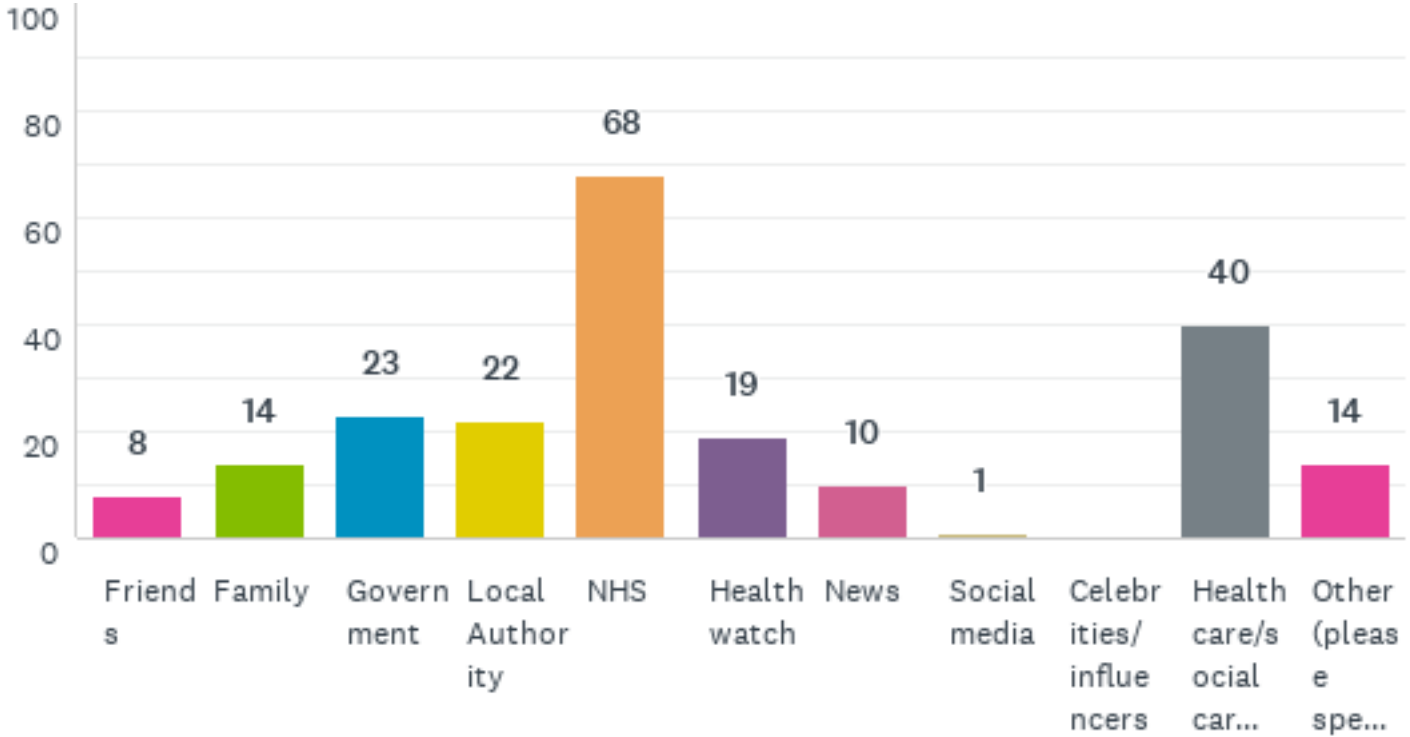
How would you prefer to find out about information regarding the Vaccine?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

- *“Any credible source.”*
- *“Not the media, it’s not giving complete information in order to make a informed decision. They need to be truthful about the pros, cons and side-effects. My friend in his 40s developed myocarditis after his 1st AZ vaccine.”*
- *“Print media.”*
- *“More detailed emails sent directly to people, especially those who don’t trust the government, as they don’t share their data.”*
- *“Social media.”*
- *“Information from the NHS website.”*
- *“As wide a variety of sources as possible, media can be very misleading, even at the best of times.”*
- *“Letters addressed directly to me, from my GP.”*

Who do you trust to provide you with reliable information regarding the vaccine?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



Who do you trust to provide you with reliable information regarding the vaccine? Cont.

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

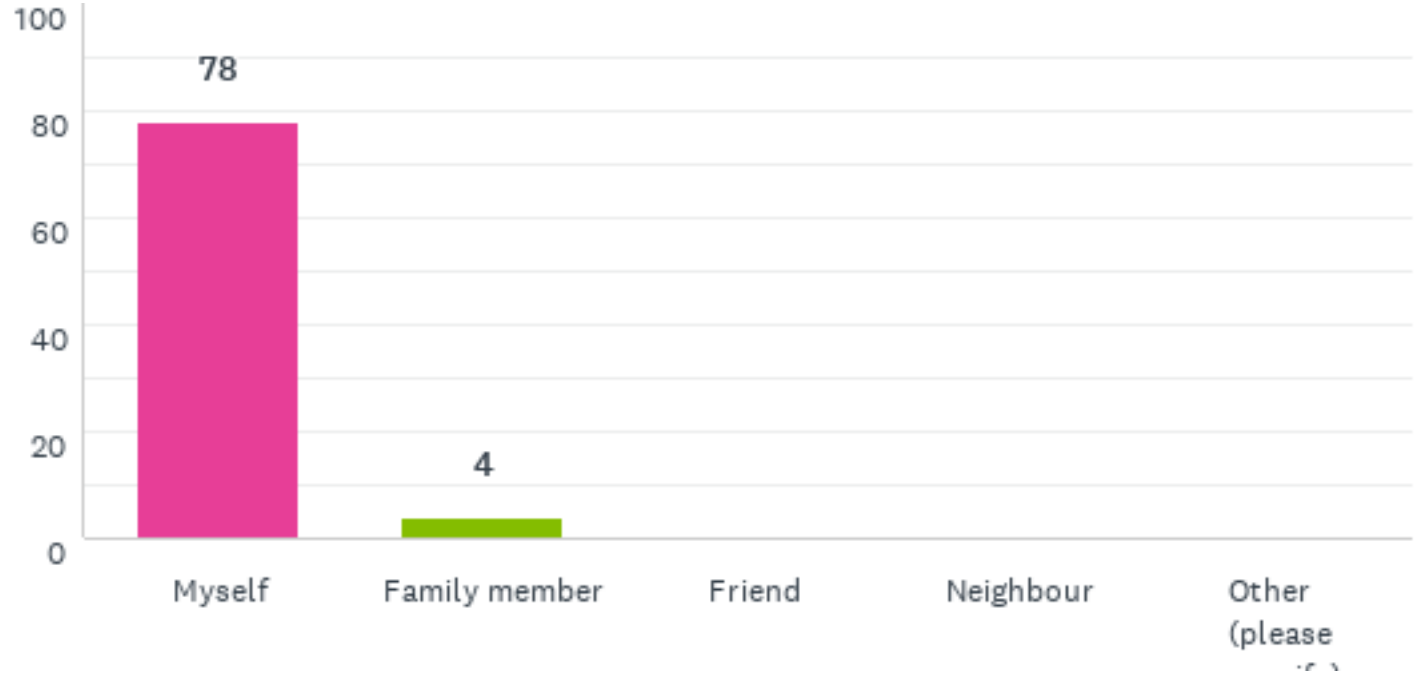
People who responded with ‘Other’ stated:

- *“Studies from reputable research/journal sites.”*
- *“None of the above.”*
- *“Don't trust anybody else, government have lied.”*
- *“Nobody.”*
- *“I trust my family because they are healthcare professionals. I would also trust my university course.”*
- *“Currently unsure what to believe after seeing government’s data has been incorrect.”*
- *“Independent research.”*
- *“None.”*
- *“Non-biased scientists, should be debates between both sides.”*
- *“Not the government or their corrupt scientists. They all have shares in the vaccine companies for starters. A virus didn't shut the economy people did. A virus didn't lock us all up people did.”*
- *“Only myself.”*
- *“Combination is the best and I listen to scientists with qualifications to comment. They do disagree at times.”*
- *“Researchers.”*
- *“Scientists SAGE and I want to see real time data so I can make my own risk assessment and not told it is safe to have a meal out for a tenner only to see thousands die following MP’s and the Chancellor’s lies.”*

Survey Participant Data - Demographics and Protected Characteristics

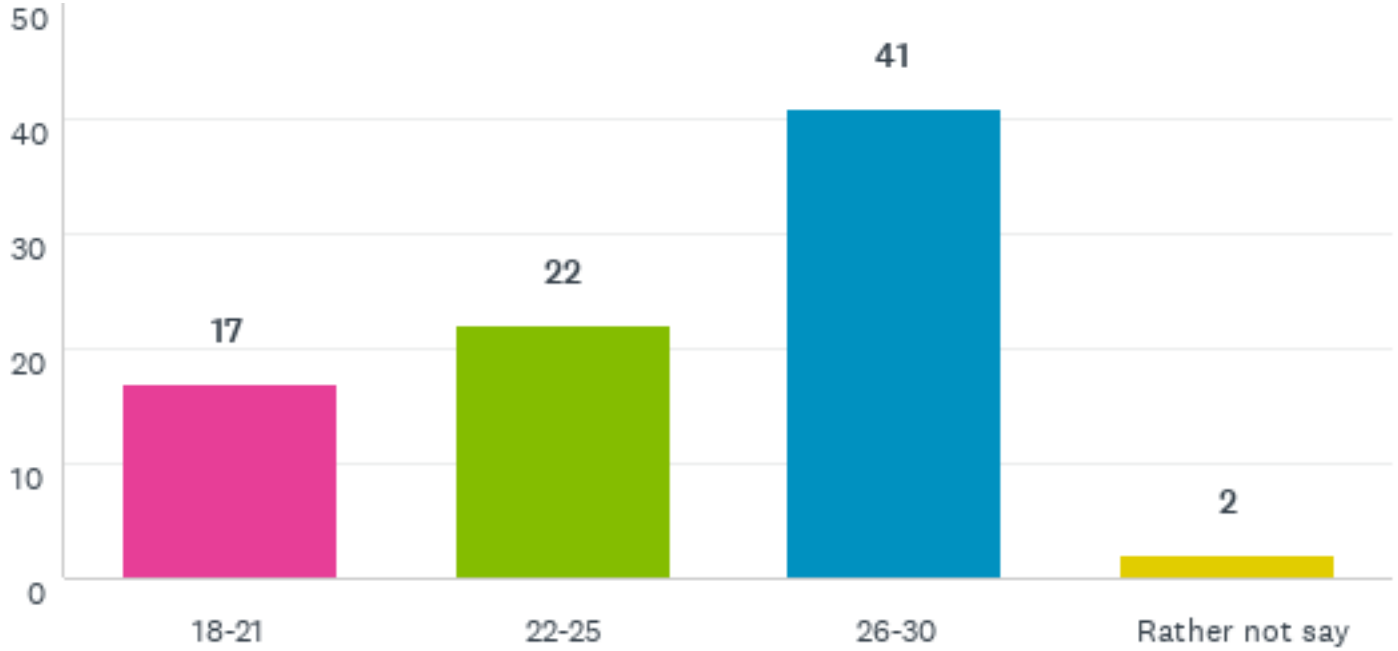
Are you answering this survey for yourself or on behalf of someone else?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



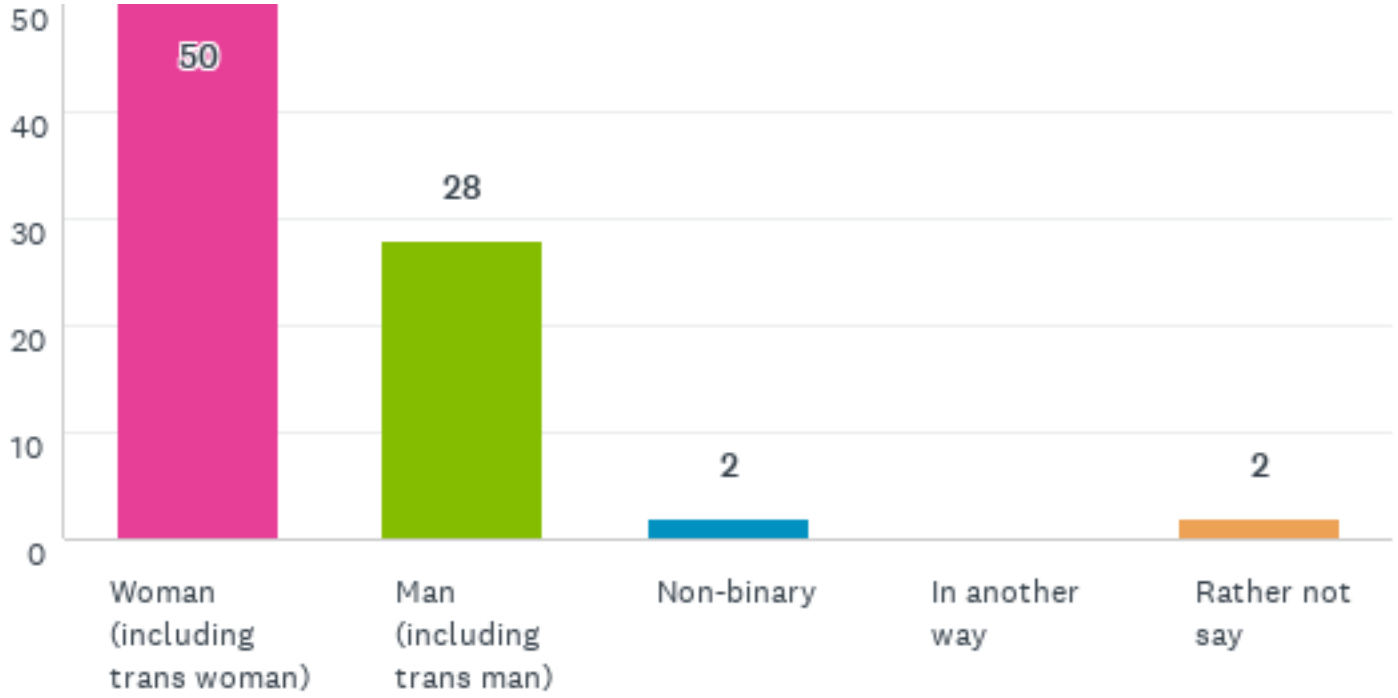
What is your age group?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



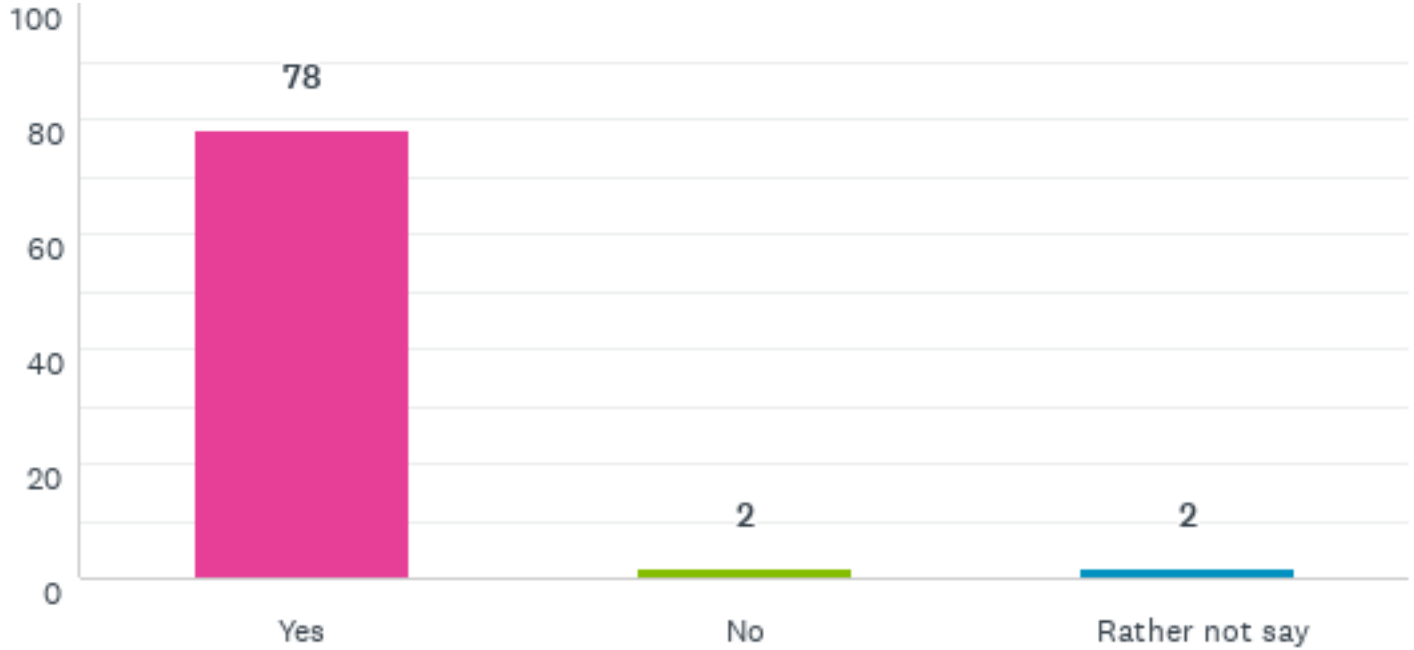
Gender identity - Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



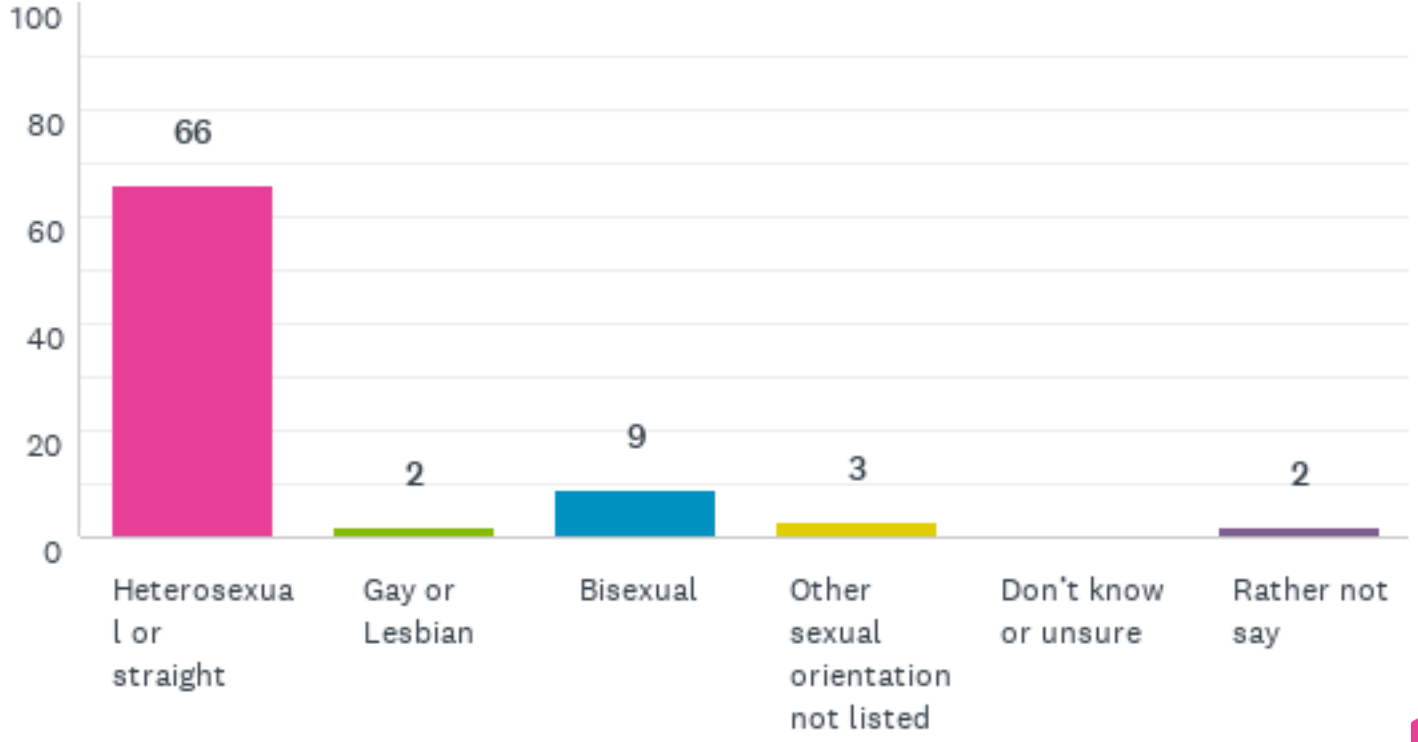
Gender identity - Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were given at birth?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



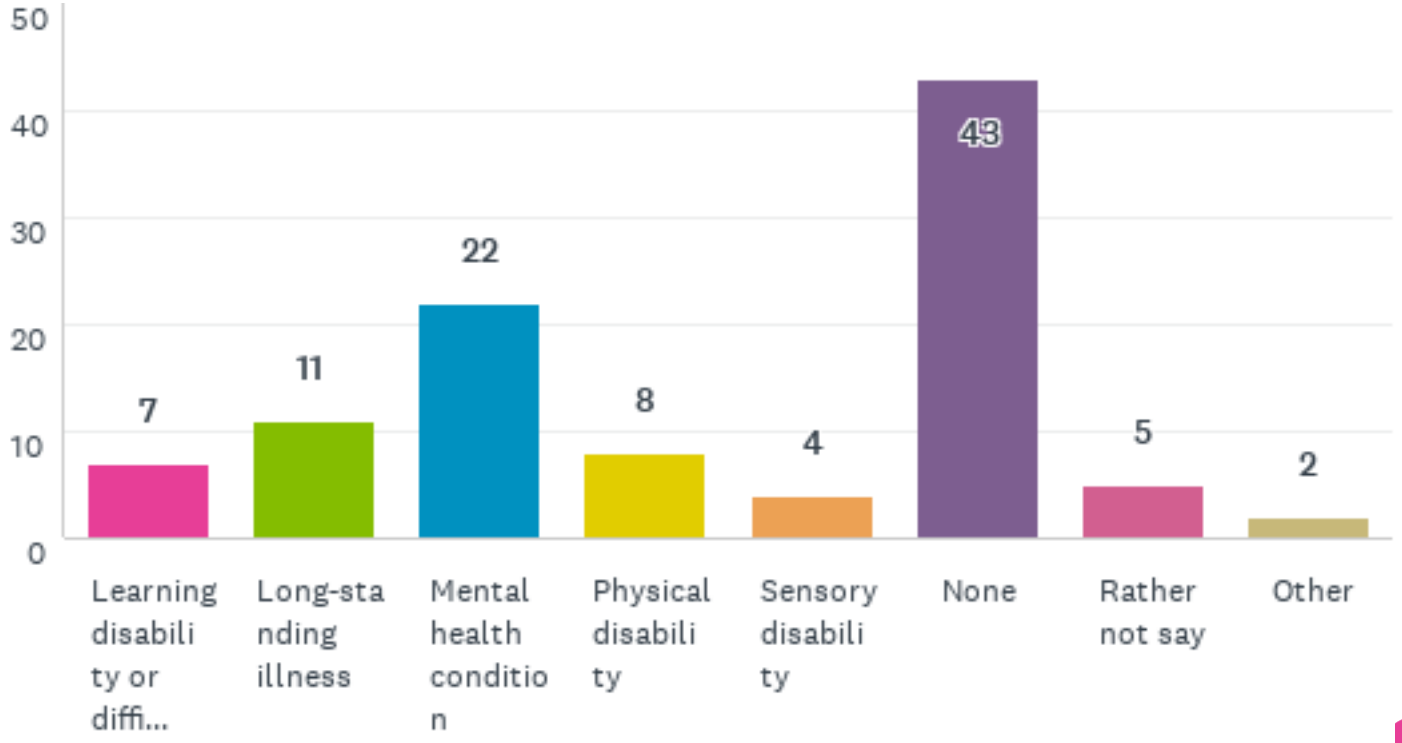
What is your ethnicity?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Asian Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Asian Chinese	0.00%	0
Asian Indian	0.00%	0
Asian Pakistani	0.00%	0
Other Asian Background	0.00%	0
White and Asian	0.00%	0
White and Black African	0.00%	0
White and Black Caribbean	2.44%	2
Other Mixed Background	0.00%	0
White British	89.02%	73
Black British	1.22%	1
White Irish	1.22%	1
Gypsy/Traveller	0.00%	0
Other White Background	3.66%	3
Other	0.00%	0
Rather not say	2.44%	2
TOTAL		82

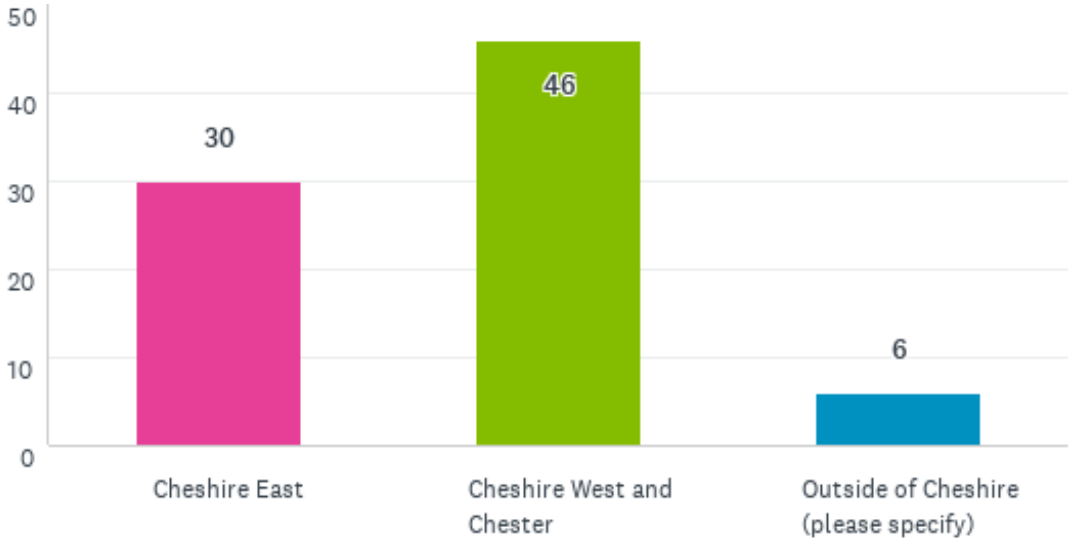
Do you consider yourself to have any of the following?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



Do you live in?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48



People living outside of Cheshire responded:

- *"Salford"*
- *"Newcastle-under-Lyme"*
- *"Wirral"*
- *"Stockport – born in Northwich"*
- *"Greater Manchester"*
- *"Trafford"*

What is the name of your nearest town or village?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 48

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Alderley Edge and Wilmslow	2.44%	2
Bollington, Disley and Poynton	1.22%	1
Congleton or Holmes Chapel	1.22%	1
Crewe	17.07%	14
Knutsford	1.22%	1
Macclesfield	8.54%	7
Nantwich, Wrenbury or Audlem	3.66%	3
Sandbach, Middlewich, Alsager, Scholar Green or Haslington	2.44%	2
Chester East (Christleton, Littleton, Huntington, Boughton, Upton, Hoole, Mollington, Mickle Trafford)	2.44%	2
Chester South (Blacon, Lache, Saughall, Eccleston, Handbridge, Dodleston, Kinnerton)	6.10%	5
Ellesmere Port	6.10%	5
Chester Central (City Centre)	17.07%	14
Frodsham, Helsby or Elton	3.66%	3
Neston and Willaston	1.22%	1
Northwich	13.41%	11
Tarporley, Malpas, Ashton, Farndon, Tattenhall, Kelsall, or Tarvin	2.44%	2
Winsford	3.66%	3
Outside Cheshire (please specify)	6.10%	5
TOTAL		82

Feedback from NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group

“We know that some young people are worried about taking the Covid vaccine and we wanted to understand why so that we can address those concerns. It is really important that everyone makes an informed choice when deciding whether to get their jab. This work by Healthwatch has allowed us to hear the voices and experiences of younger local residents which we will use to inform our communications messages and the way we deliver the vaccine. Another great piece of work from Healthwatch.”

Dr Sinead Clarke, Joint Medical Director for NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group