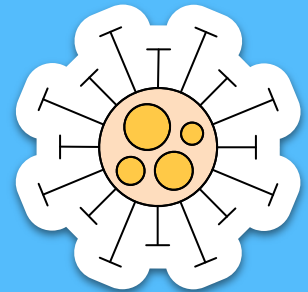
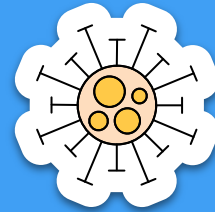


A Community Approach to Increasing Covid-19 Vaccination Rates in Communities of Color in Worcester, Massachusetts

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December 2022

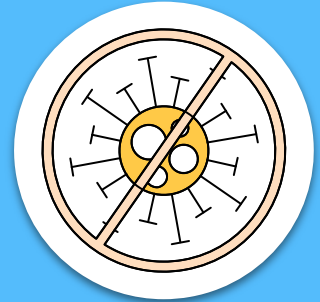


Public Health Problem

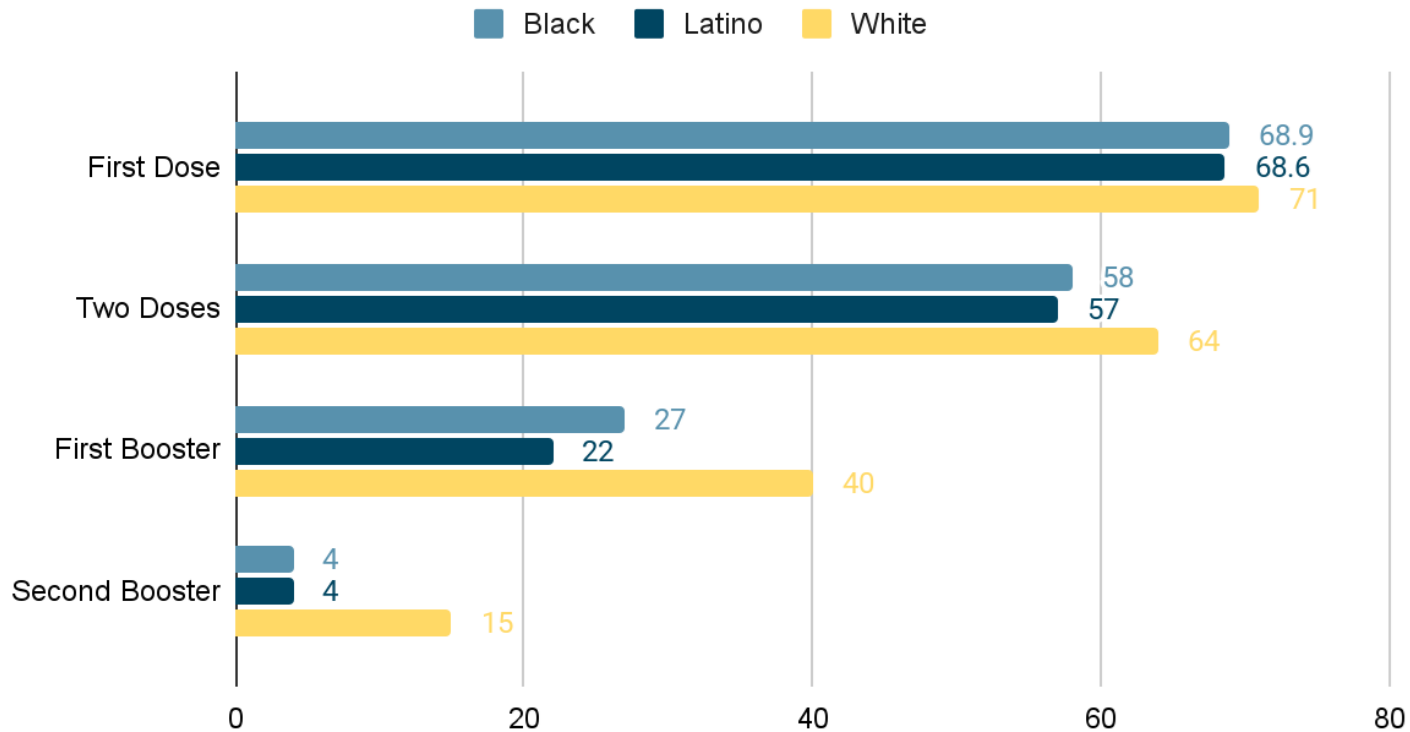
- Stagnant vaccination rates in Black and Latino communities in Worcester
- Social determinants of health create disproportionate burden of disease on communities of color
- Factors that influence social epidemiology of Covid-19 spread
- Chelsea, MA has a much higher vaccination rate... what can we learn from them?



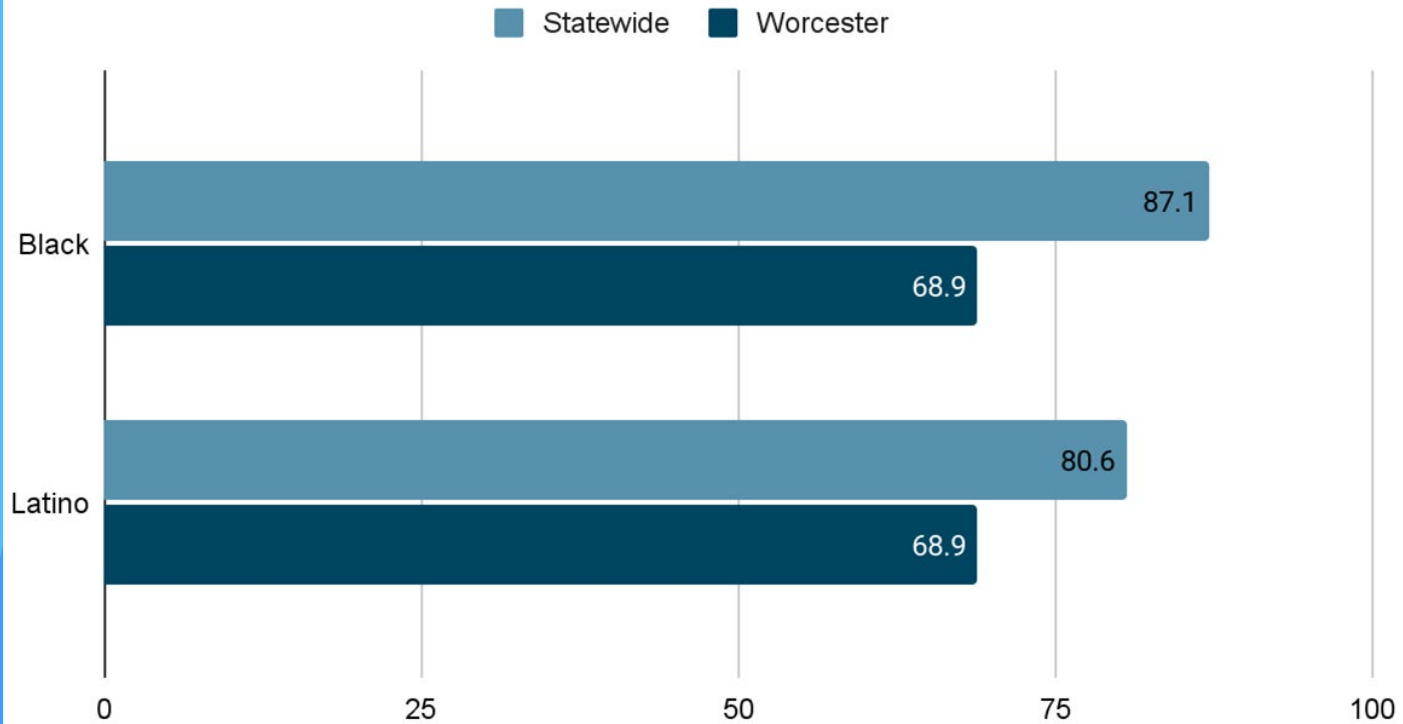
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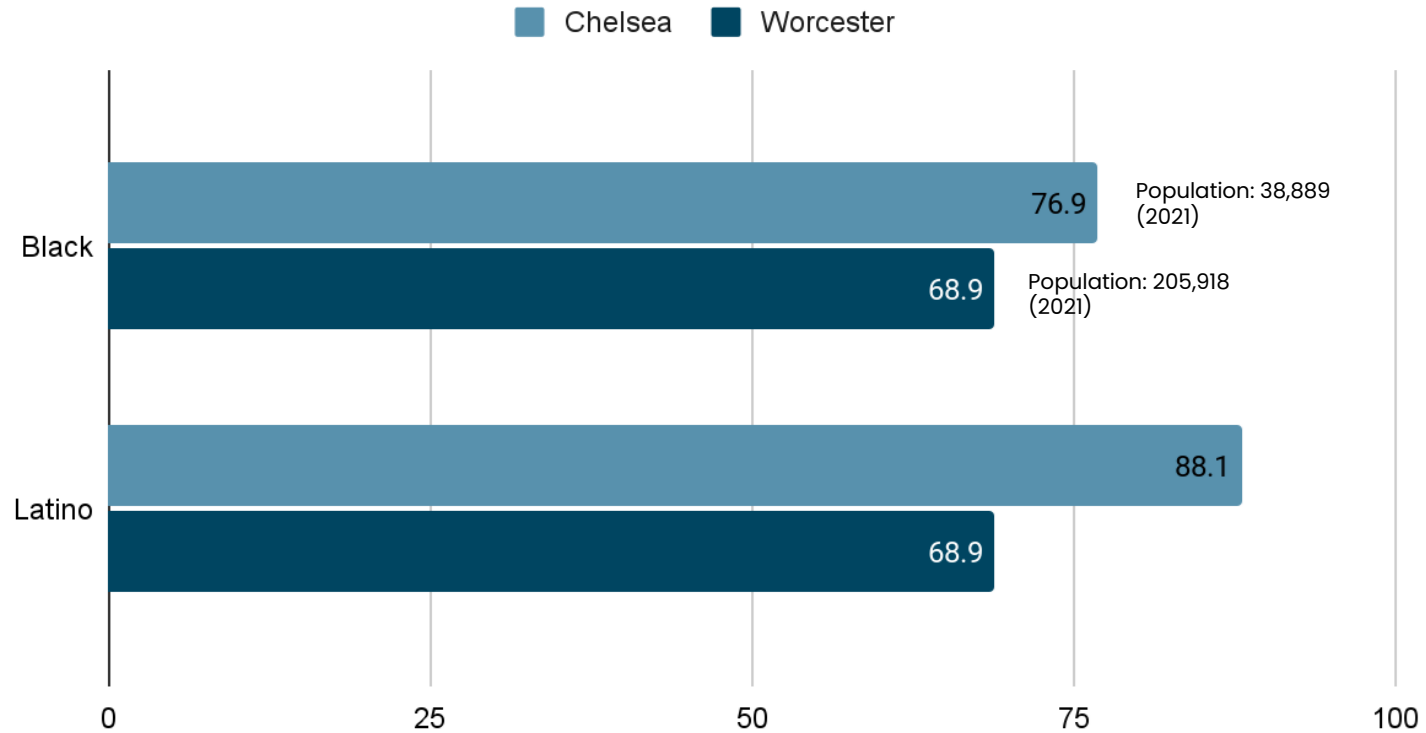
Vaccination Rates in Worcester, MA (%)



Vaccination Rates Statewide v. Worcester (%)



Vaccination Rates Chelsea v. Worcester (%)



Worcester Past Efforts

- Worcester REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) spearheaded multiple vaccination campaigns specifically to vaccinate communities of color, including Hispanic/Latino, Black, African American and Asian communities
- Utilized Vaccine Equity Initiative to disperse funds to community organizations that helped support vaccine distribution, communications and acceptance
- Ran focused grassroots outreach to generate support for the vaccine
 - Cumulation of 36,539 doors knocked on, 23,414 phone calls made, and 11,617 one-on-one conversations had, 43.2% of which were with unvaccinated people since vaccine became available
 - Hosted 308 visibility and outreach events

Objectives



**Understand
Chelsea's
Vaccination Plan**



**Connect with
Residents**



Develop Code



**Create
Recommendations**

Methods

Data Review

Review vaccination data from across the state

Interview

Chelsea public health officials

Interview

Residents of Worcester

Interview

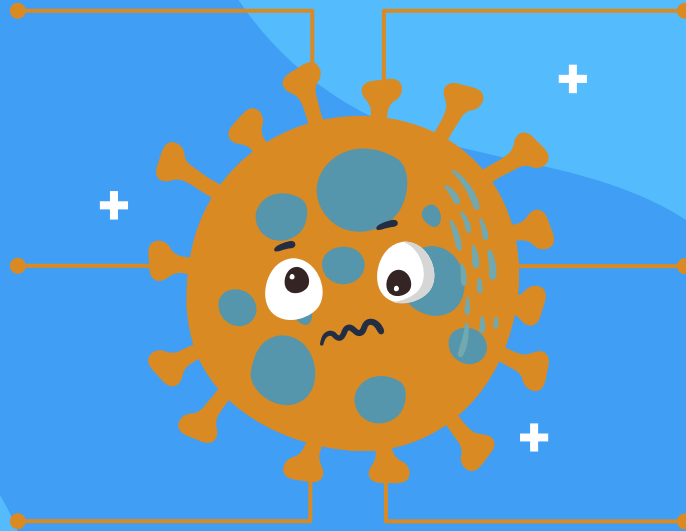
Community leaders of Worcester

Analyze

Review results to find any patterns in hesitancy

Create

Recommendations for Worcester

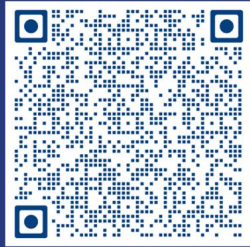


Chelsea Results

- Previously prepared information coming from all sources, focused on protecting families and elderly
- 3 different groups were designated for different city blocks, focused on Latino and Black populations
- Hesitant residents were left with informational pamphlets with emphasis on previous successful vaccines they would be familiar with
- Emphasis on diverse messengers, standard messaging and faith-based anecdotes
- Utilized wastewater testing in response to areas of high transmission

Have you been vaccinated against COVID-19?

The Department of Health and Human Services wants to know why or why not!



Follow this QR code and take a short survey to voice your thoughts on the vaccine!



The City of
WORCESTER
Health & Human Services

¿Ha sido vacunado contra el COVID-19?

¡El Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos quiere saber sus pensamientos sobre la vacuna contra el Covid 19!



¡Siga este código QR y responda una breve encuesta para expresar su opinión sobre la vacuna!



The City of
WORCESTER
Health & Human Services

Worcester Results

- Mistrust of boosters
 - Do boosters indicate that the first vaccine sequence was a failure?
- Too forceful of an approach from the government
 - Misleading information coming from media platforms
 - Anti-regulatory ideology
- Mistrust in the vaccination testing
 - Perception of health officials lying about side effects and long term health complications, specifically concerning menstruation and reproduction
- Vaccine and Covid-19 fatigue
 - Tired of new boosters, alarmed by the number of dosages, dislike of boosters
- Issues of access
 - Having to take time off work to get boosters, vaccinate kids, prepare for side effects
- Fundamental misunderstanding of disease spread



76%

Residents answered "no" or "not applicable" to "Has your opinion about the vaccine changed throughout the pandemic?"

88%

Residents do not think their opinions were influenced by any form of media

Recommendations

- Continuing to increase access through mobile clinics in the most vulnerable communities
- Designate “Neighborhood Captains” to generate outreach
- Contextualize solutions through community relevance
 - Social determinants
 - Historical discrimination and reduced access to quality care
- Create health reports or flyers that explain in simple terms the outcomes of significant vaccine research studies
 - People are confused by how data changed throughout the pandemic. That’s okay!
- Create a more robust public health program offered within public schools to support a better understanding of disease, vaccination and health history, as well as build stronger health literacy!

Setbacks

- Outreach
 - Convincing people to take a survey is difficult!
 - Locating safe and reliable locations to spend time consistently surveying Worcester residents
- Response rates from community leaders
- Thinking of feasible, realistic recommendations to improve the vaccination rates in Worcester overall

“Pandemics are social events, not just biological ones.”



—Dr. Nancy Krieger, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health



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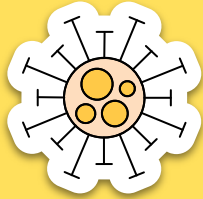
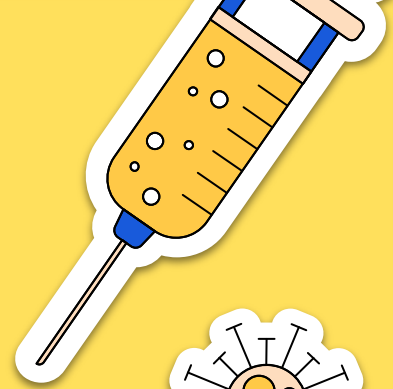
Chelsea DPH

Worcester Department
of Health and Human
Services

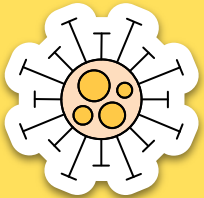
The Residents of
Worcester



Thanks!



Do you have any questions?



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