

# Healthcare & Medical Research Study

## Australian General Population



IMMUNISATION  
COALITION

April 2018



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# Questions

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## **Questions Included in the Research (Qualitative & Quantitative)**

- Q1. Do you intend to get a flu shot this year?
- Q2. What is your main reason for intending to get a flu shot this year?
- Q3. What is your main reason for not intending to get a flu shot this year?
- Q4. What is your attitude towards the flu?
- Q5. Who should have a flu shot?
- Q6. When do you plan to get vaccinated?
- Q7. What are your thoughts on the flu shot?

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# Methodology

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# Overview

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## Sample

- National, representative sample with interviews undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.
- 15,151 respondents participated in the survey, apportioned as:
  - Qualitative research (focus groups): 68
  - Quantitative research (telephone interviews & online survey): 15,083

## Methodology

- 6 focus groups, comprising 10-12 respondents in each, undertaken in:
  - Sydney                      - Adelaide
  - Melbourne                - Perth
  - Brisbane                   - Canberra
- 1,021 telephone interviews, average of 17 minutes duration, undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.
- 14,062 online interviews, average of 22 minutes duration, undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.

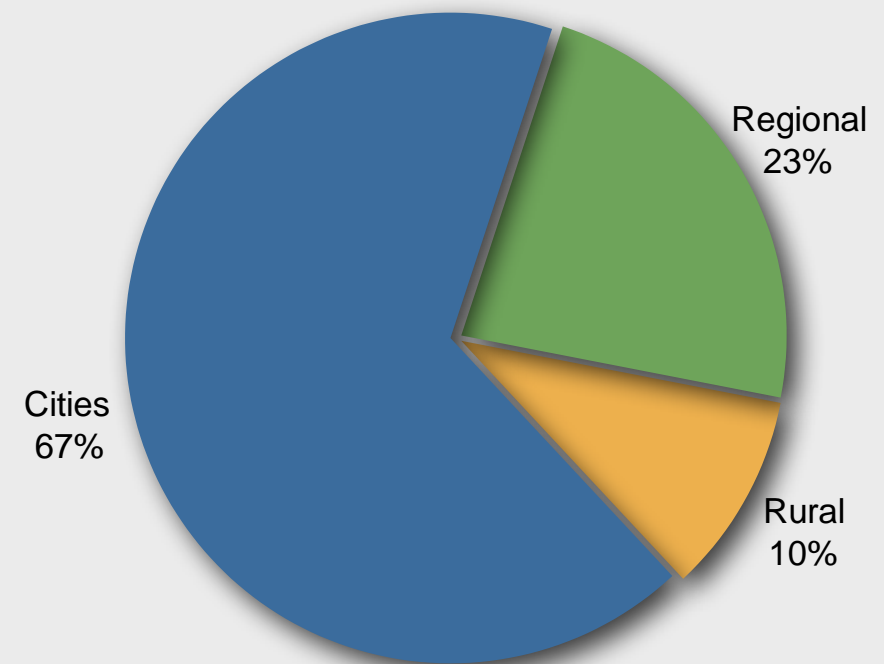
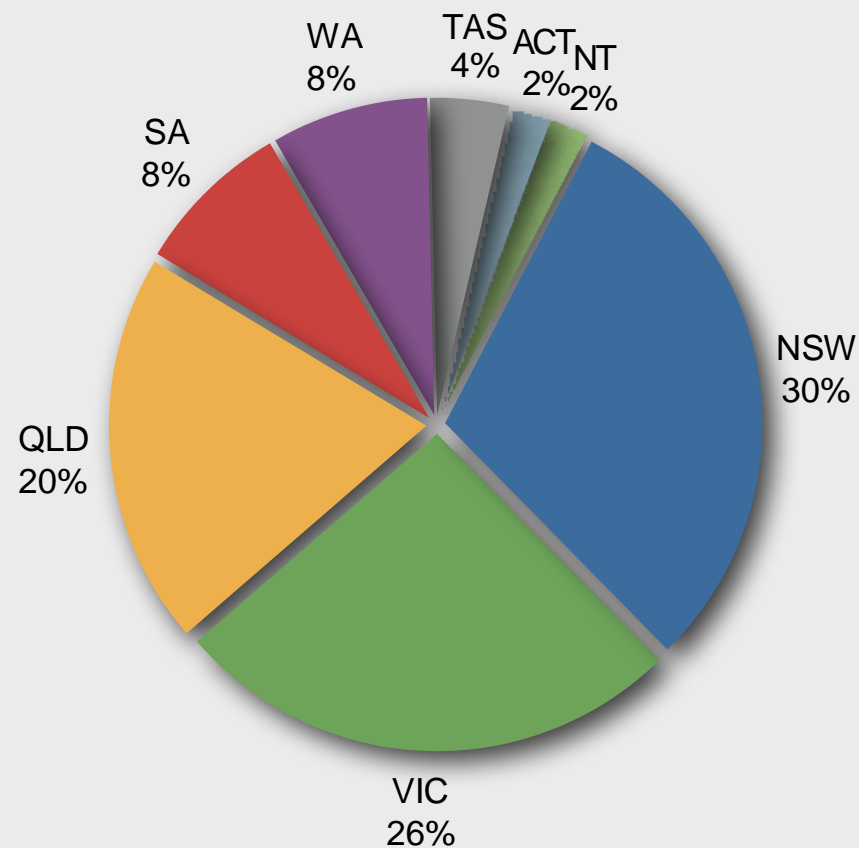
## Data Collection

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Focus Groups:           | • Telephone & Online Survey: |
| - 30th March to 3rd April | - 4th April to 9th April     |

# Geographic Coverage

## National Representative Sample

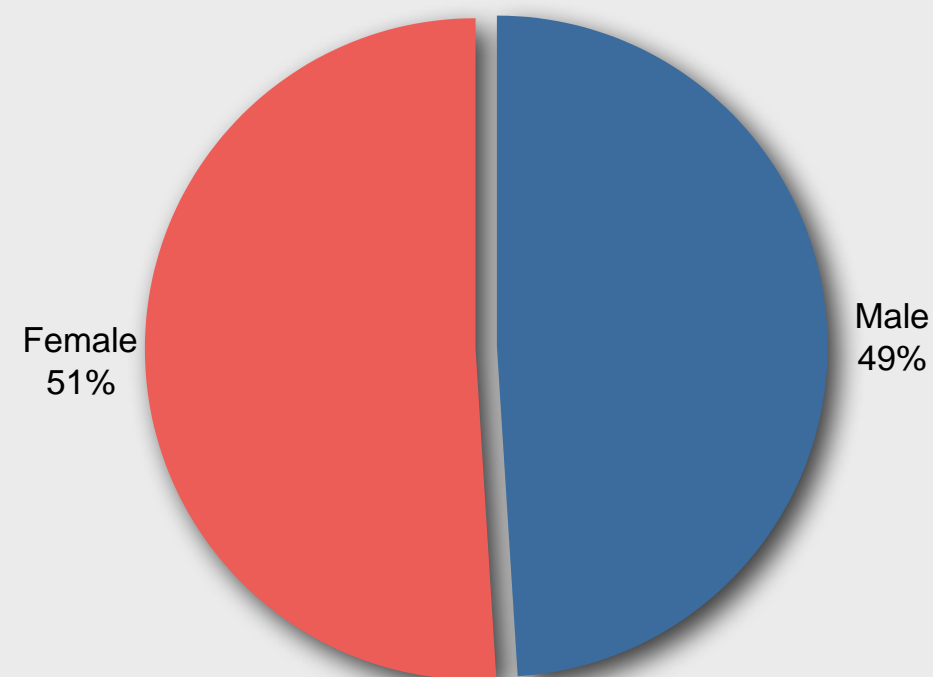
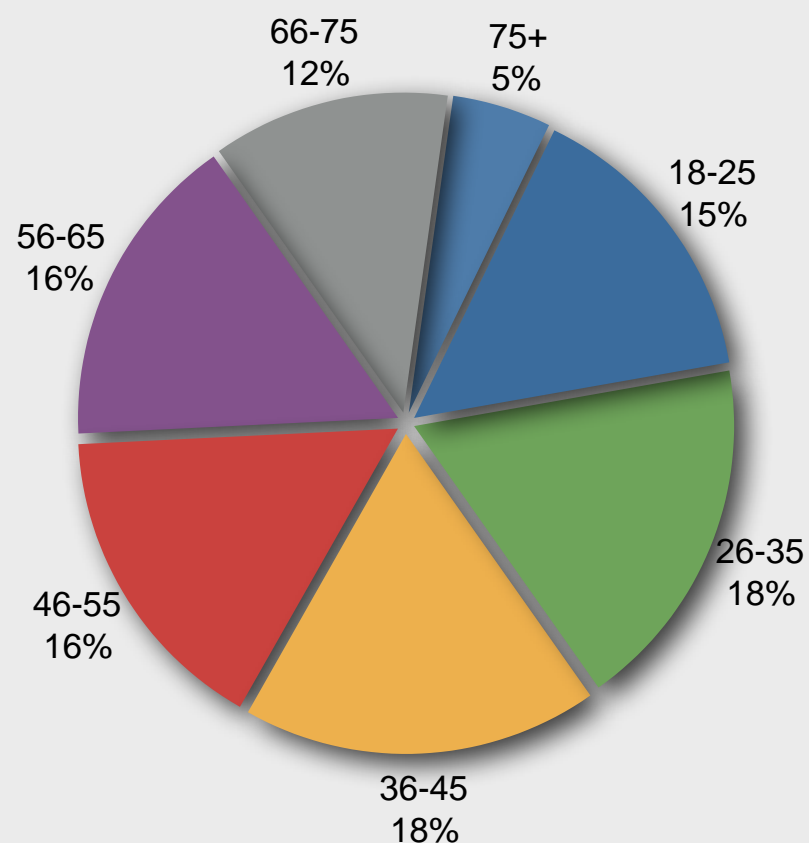
- Interviews were undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken are illustrated in the charts below, presented amongst all states and territories and amongst capital cities, regional and rural towns.



# Age & Gender

## National Representative Sample

- Interviews undertaken were amongst a representative sample of the Australian population aged 18+ years of age.
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken amongst the age groups used throughout the study and gender are illustrated in the charts below.

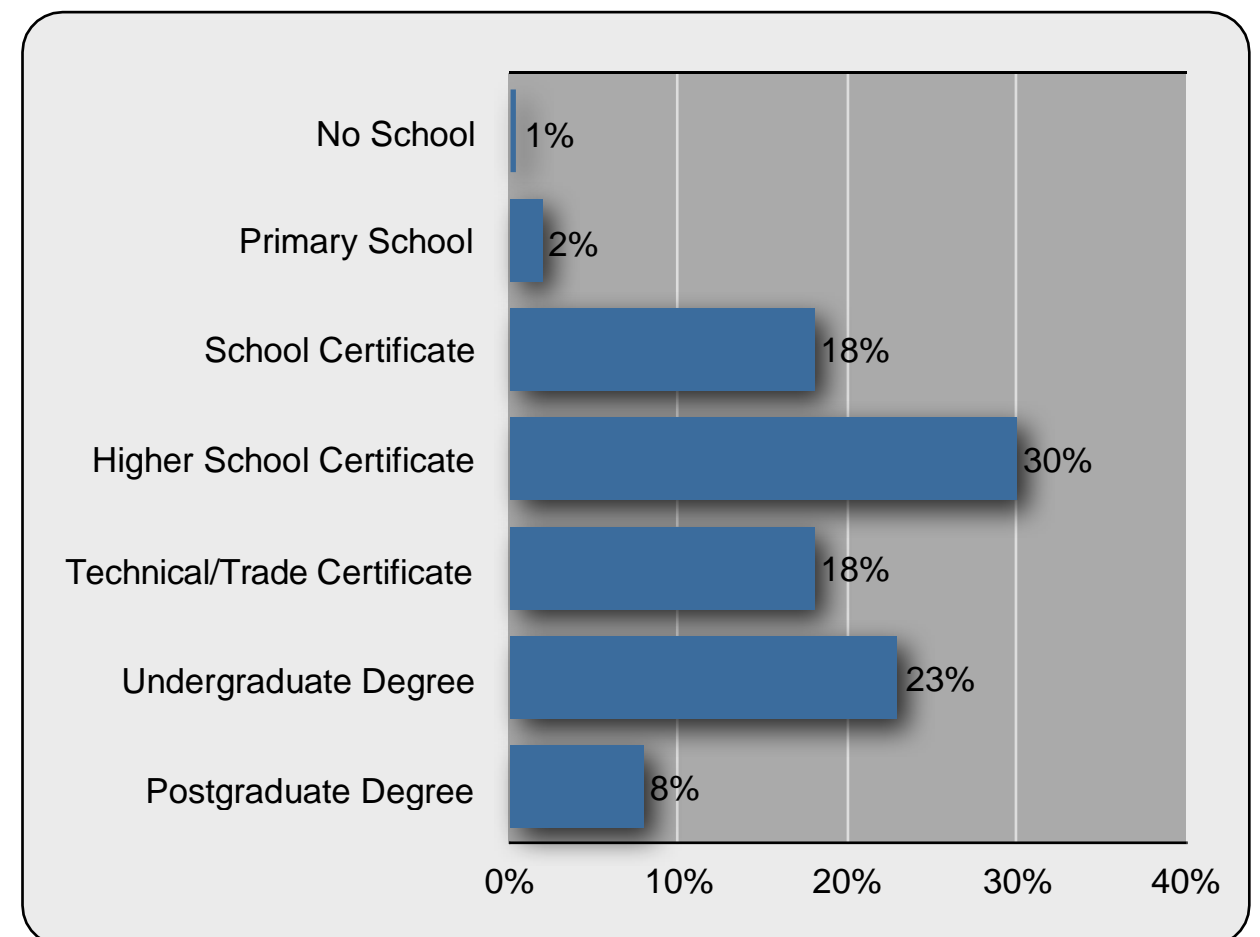
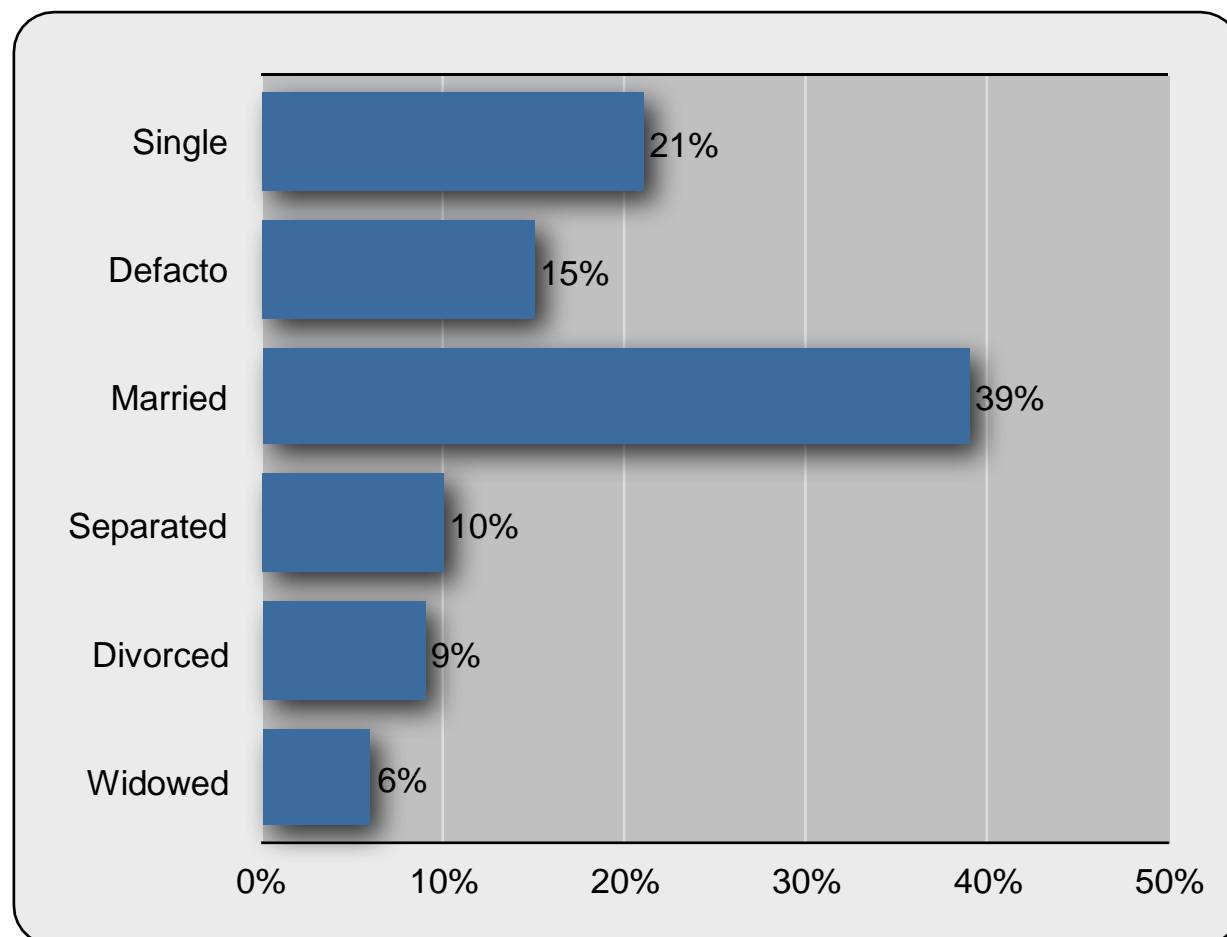




# Demographic Factors

## Marital Status & Education

- Interviews were undertaken amongst a representative sample of the Australian adult population, based on key demographic factors, these being:
  - Marital status
  - Highest level of education
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken amongst these two key demographic factors are illustrated in the charts below.

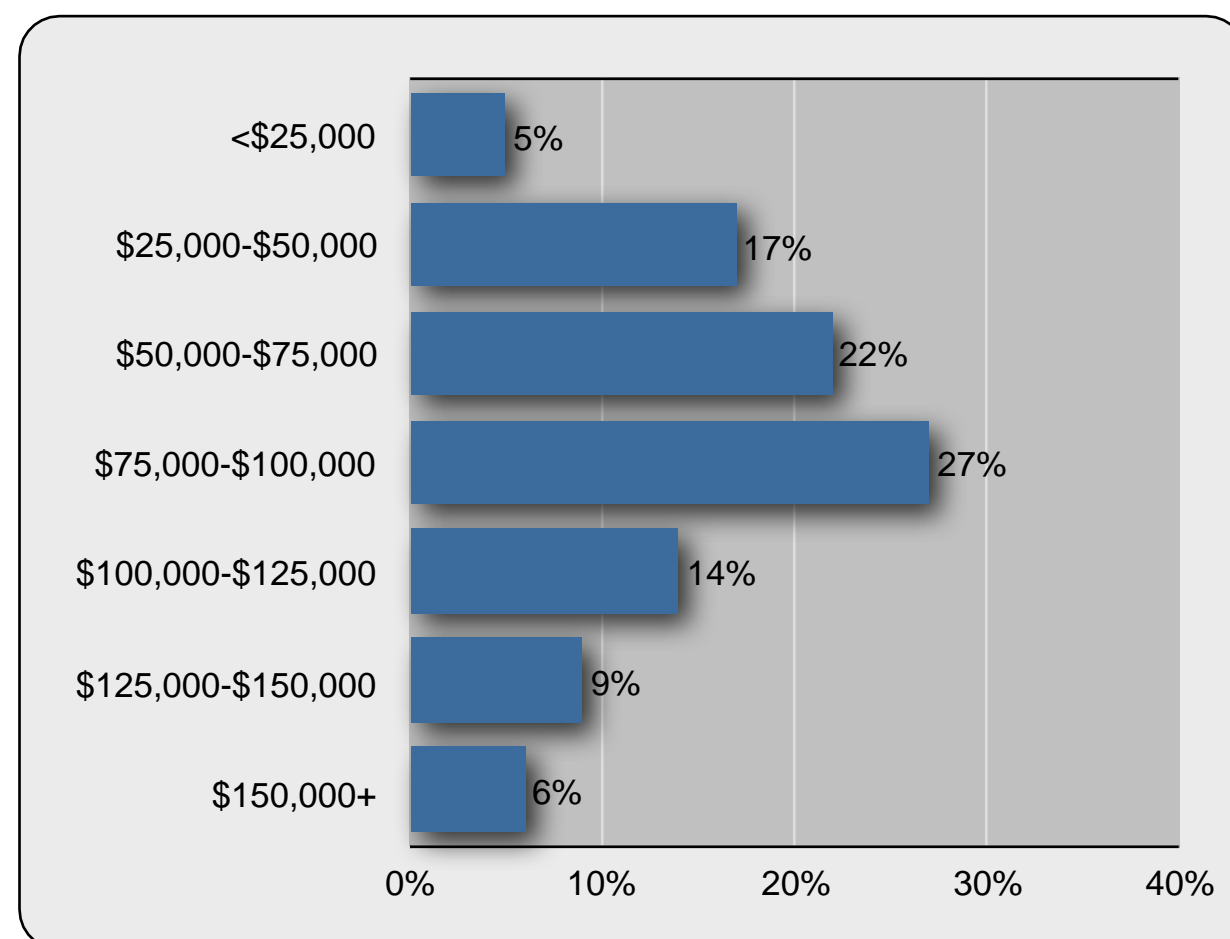
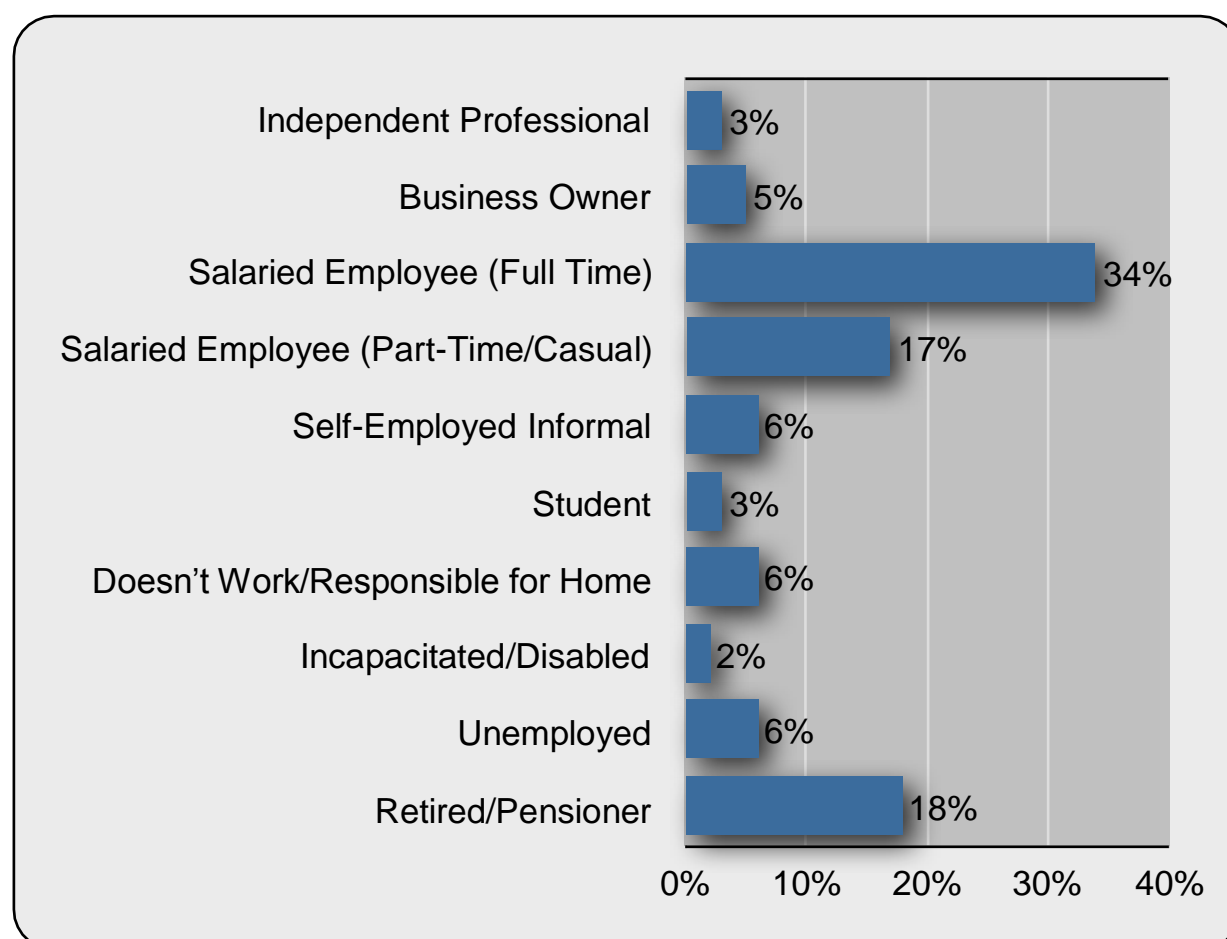




# Socio-Economic Factors

## Occupation & Household Income

- Interviews were undertaken amongst a representative sample of the Australian adult population, based on the key socio-economic factor, these being:
  - Occupation
  - Household income
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken based on occupation & household income are illustrated in the charts below.



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# **Intention of Having Flu Shot**

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# 44% of adults intend to get flu shot

## Q1. Do you intend to get a flu shot this year?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - 44% of the adult population answered “Yes”
  - 56% of the population answered “No”

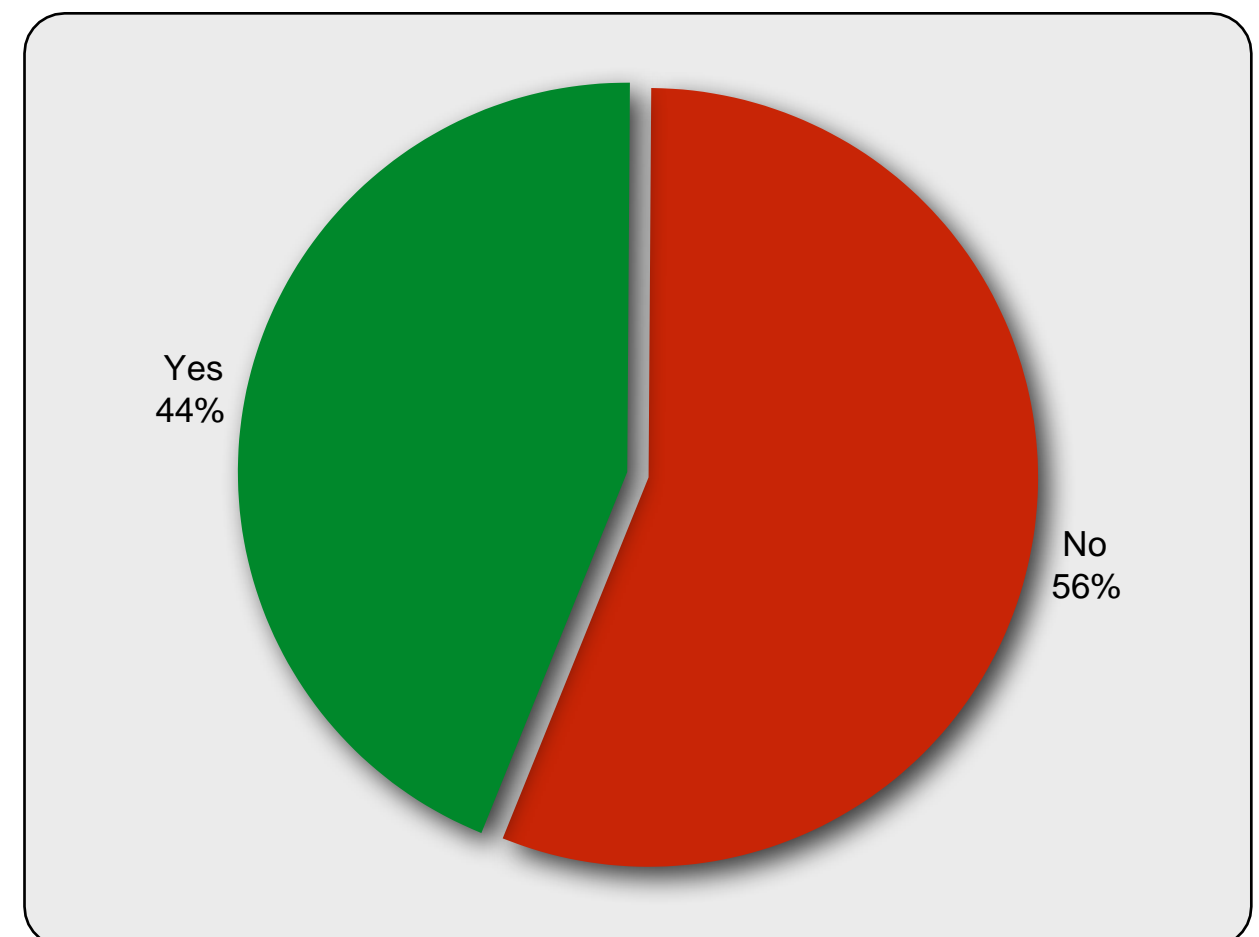
## Women aged 55+ have the highest intention

- The segment of the population with the highest intention of having a flu shot this year are women aged 55+:
  - 74% of this group intend to have a flu shot

*“Yes, I will have a flu shot this year, I usually have one every year and I’m even keener this year as last year’s flu was so bad.”*  
Dawn, 69, Retired, Wishart (Brisbane), QLD

*“As soon as it becomes available would be my answer, I haven’t heard about when this years’ flu shot will be available, this reminds me to check, but it’s usually April-May and I think its best to get it as soon as it’s available not only so you don’t get the flu, but also because some years there is a shortage and it becomes difficult to get.”*

Karen, 57, University Lecturer, Warrawee (Sydney), NSW



# Much higher amongst females

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## Women in full-time employment very high

- The second highest segment of the population intending to have a flu shot is women who are in full-time employment:
  - 68% intend to have a flu shot

*"Yes, I plan to have one, coming here this evening has reminded me to make an appointment with my GP to have it."*

*Joanne, 53, Receptionist, Athol Park (Adelaide), SA*

*"My workplace arranges for us to have free flu shots, I have had one for the last 4 years and will do so again this year."*

*Maia, 40, Operations Manager, Aranda (Canberra), ACT*

## Parents of young children also high

- The third highest segment of the population intending to have a flu shot is parents with school-age children:
  - 64% intend to have a flu shot

*"I have a 3 year old and she is in daycare where colds and flu are always going around, plus my husband and I use public transport to go to and from work, so our family gets the flu shot every year to protect ourselves as much as we can."*

*Nazli, 36, Accountant, Doncaster (Melbourne), VIC*

## Middle-aged men regional & rural areas lowest

- The segment of the population with the lowest intention of having a flu shot this year are middle aged men (aged 35-45) living in regional & rural areas:
  - 27% intend to have a flu shot

## Lower income & regional & rural areas very low

- The second lowest segment of the population intending to have a flu shot are those from households with annual income <\$50,000 in regional & rural areas:
  - 31% intend to have a flu shot

## Regional & rural areas very low

- Regardless of household income, those in regional & rural areas were the third lowest segment:
  - 35% intend to have a flu shot

## Young men also low

- Young men aged 18-34, regardless of geographic location, were the fourth lowest segment:
  - 36% intend to have a flu shot

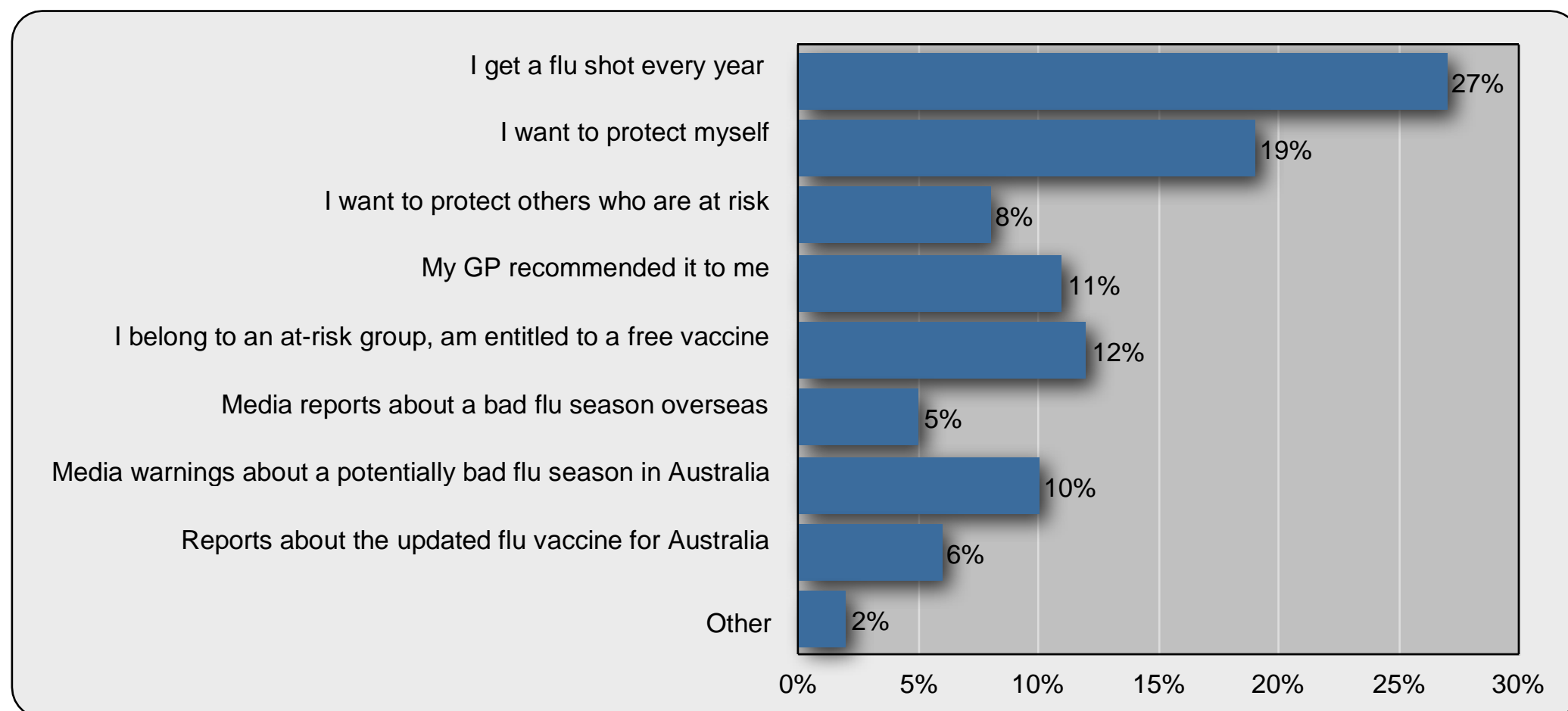
*"I've never had a flu shot and I don't intend to start having one, I think my immune system is strong and I have no need for it."*

*Rick, 29, Surveyor, Wakerly (Brisbane), QLD*

# Habit of flu shot every year

## ***Q2. What is your main reason for intending to get a flu shot this year?***

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response was “I get a flu shot every year” by 27% of the adult population
  - “I want to protect myself” was the second most common response by 19%
  - The third most common response was “I belong to an at-risk group, am entitled to a free vaccine amongst 12%
  - “My GP recommended it to me” was the next most common response by 11%
  - “Media warnings about a potentially bad flu season in Australia” the next most common amongst 10%
  - “I want to protect others who are at risk” the next most common response amongst 8%
  - “Reports about the updated flu vaccine for Australia” amongst 6%



# Habit and protecting myself lead

## Habit for the majority

- The main reason for intending to get a flu shot this year, given by 27% of the population was “I get a flu shot every year”:
  - From the focus groups, it was clear that habit was a major factor amongst those who intend to have a flu shot this year, with the overwhelming majority saying that they do so every year, out of habit, women were most likely to have this habit.

*“I have an annual flu shot at my GP’s surgery every year as soon as it becomes available, it’s become a habit...I’ve been doing this for probably around 10 years and I definitely recommend it as I never get the flu, at worst a mild cold which clears up quickly.”*

*Virginia, 51, Stay at Home Parent, Sefton Park (Adelaide), SA*

## Protecting myself

- The second main reason given for getting a flu shot this year amongst 19% of the population was “I want to protect myself”:
  - Discussion in the focus groups of the severity of last year’s flu and that of the northern hemisphere’s recent flu was top of mind amongst the overwhelming majority of people, where many stated that this year they intend to have a flu shot when it becomes available to protect themselves

*“Last year I was one of the many who had it and it took me a month to get over it, so this year I’m going to protect myself and have the flu shot for the first time.”*

*Patrick, 38, Electrician, Clayton South (Melbourne), VIC*

## At-risk groups and GP recommendations

- Those from at-risk groups formed the third main reason for getting a flu shot this year, where for one of the main at-risk groups, those aged 65+ it was found:
  - 63% of those aged 65+ intended to get a flu shot
  - 59% of this 63% (aged 65+ who intended to get a flu shot) responded that “My GP recommended it to me”

*“Yes, I will be getting a flu shot in the next month, my GP recommends it every year and her surgery sends me a SMS to make an appointment around this time.”*

*Heather, 76, Retiree, Turramurra (Sydney), NSW*

## Media warnings

- The fourth main reason was found to be “Media warnings about a potentially bad flu season in Australia” given by 10% of the population:
  - Women aged 36-45 were the highest group which mentioned this, with 18% giving this response, followed by women aged 56-65 with 16% giving this response
  - Young men aged 18-25 were the lowest group, with 6% giving this response, followed by people living in regional and rural areas, where 8% gave this response

*“It was all over the media last year and I’ve heard media reports in the last few weeks saying that this year’s flu is expected to again be very bad again as Europe and North America had a bad winter flu, so I’ll take the advice and get a flu shot in the next month.”*

*Janice, 42, Project Officer, Mitchell (Canberra), ACT*



# Other reasons driving intention

## Protecting others at risk

- Overall, 8% of the population responded “I want to protect others who are at risk”:
  - From the focus groups, those who mentioned this had an elderly relative or someone from an at-risk group whom they lived with or they were in regular physical contact with
  - Women aged 46-55 were the highest group who mentioned this, with 13% giving this response

*“My mother is 87 and still living alone, so I am extremely careful about not visiting her if I have the flu, so I get vaccinated every year, the primary reason being to protect her.”*

*Maggie, 53, Retiree, Greenwich (Sydney), NSW*

## Reports of updated flu vaccine for Australia

- Only 6% of the population responded “Reports about the updated flu vaccine for Australia”:
  - Women aged 36-45 were the highest group who mentioned this, with 10% giving this response
  - From the focus groups, there was only a very small number of people who mentioned that they heard media reports of an updated flu vaccine for Australia

*“I haven’t heard anything of a new vaccine being available for this winter, it should be happening soon because in a month from now the flu season will probably have started.”*

*Peng-rong, 34, Business Owner, Thomastown (Melbourne), VIC*

## Reports of a bad flu season overseas

- 5% of the population responded “Media reports of a bad flu season overseas”:
  - The was highest amongst women aged 55-64”

*“The winter in the UK and the US seems to have been really bad with the flu, they were calling it the Australian flu from what we had last winter, just a few days ago on the TV news I heard that the flu we will have in Australia this winter could be worse than last year.”*

*Sylvia, 59, Retiree, Kew (Melbourne), VIC*

## Other reasons given

- 2% gave other reasons for intending to have a flu shot this year.
- The largest response given was that employers arrange flu shots.
- The second largest “other” response was getting an unplanned vaccination, such as at a pharmacy or visiting a GP for an unrelated matter.

*“I work for a large financial services company and we arrange for the flu shot each year, free of charge to employees, so I have it at work.”*

*Joy, 41, Human Resources Manager, Neutral Bay (Sydney), NSW*

*“I had the flu last year and it was really bad, I was off work for a week, on Saturday I had a flu shot, a pharmacy was offering it for \$25 so I had it done while I was picking up some medication.”*

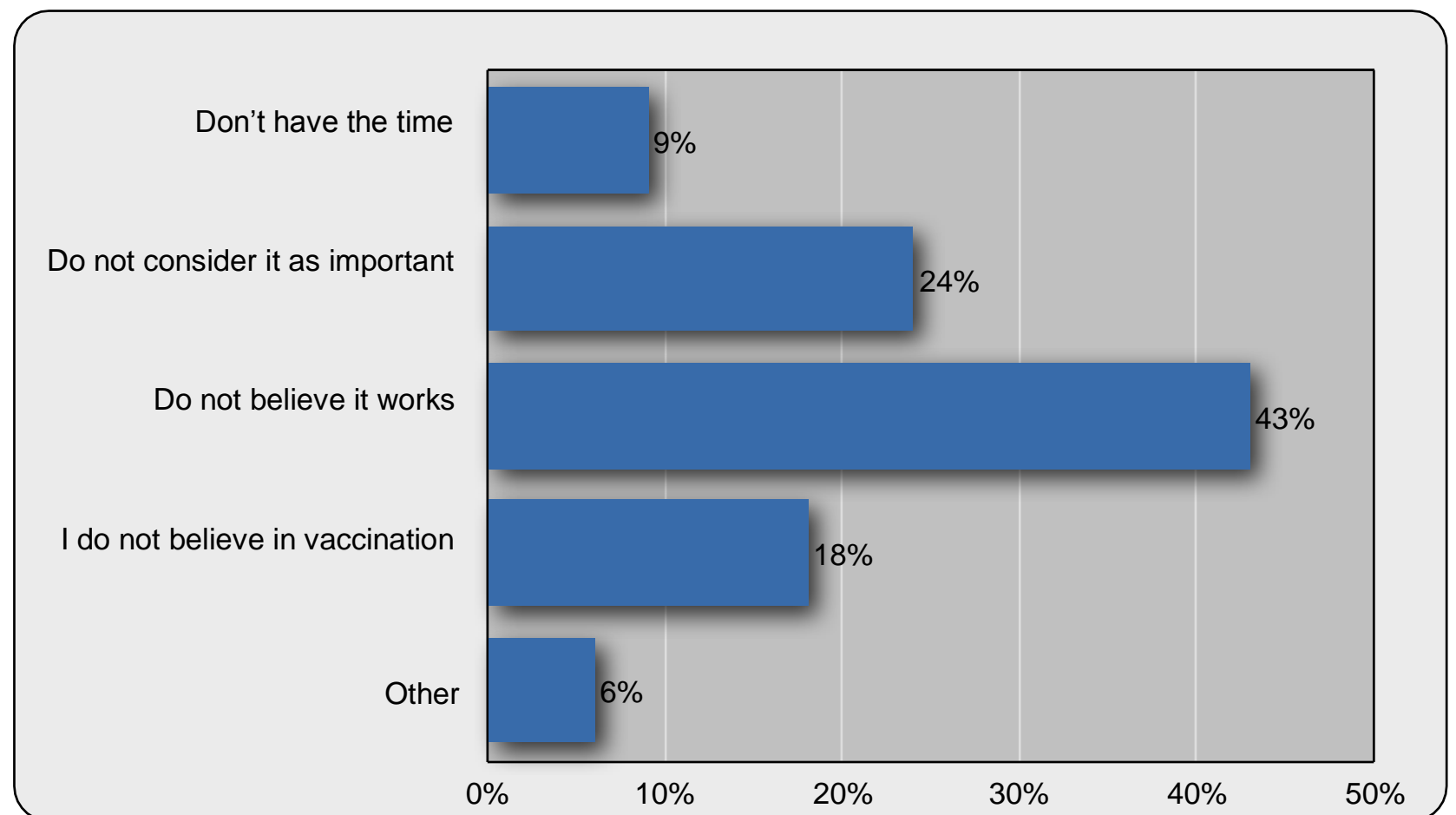
*Galiel, 34, IT Consultant, Harrison (Canberra), ACT*



# Do not believe it works

## ***Q3. What is your main reason for not intending to get a flu shot this year?***

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response, amongst 43% of the adult population was “Do not believe it works”
  - The second most common response was “Do not consider it as important” amongst 24% of the adult population
  - “I do not believe in vaccination” was the third most common response amongst 18% of the adult population
  - “Don’t have the time” was the fourth most common response amongst 9% of the adult population
  - 6% responded with “other” stating a different reason, these summarised below.



# Don't believe it works & not important

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## Do not believe it works

- The main reason given by 43% of the population was “Do not believe it works”:
  - Men were the highest group who mentioned this (57% of responses from men compared to 43% from women), particularly men aged 55-64 where 59% mentioned this
  - This was consistent with the focus groups, where older men were far more skeptical of the flu vaccine and were the majority group who said they do not believe it works
  - In every focus group, there was much discussion based on last year's flu, consensus was that the vaccine become quite ineffective due to the virus mutating and being particularly strong, because of the flu mutating, this was the main reason why most people said they do not believe it works

*“From what I have seen, many people who have a flu shot every year, still seem to get it, so because the virus changes so quickly, I don't believe that it is very effective.”*

*Ronaldo, 54, Business Owner, Drummoyne (Sydney), NSW*

*“It may work at the beginning of the year when the flu is starting to go around, but by mid-late winter it can be pretty useless because the virus has changed, that's what happened last year and it's happened in the past also.”*

*Melissa, 37, Store Manager, Farrer (Canberra), ACT*

## Do not consider as important

- The second main reason given by 24% of the population was “Do not consider it as important”:
  - Men were the highest group who mentioned this (56% of responses from men compared to 44% from women), with age also being a factor where 62% of young men aged 18-35 mentioned this
- Age was also a significant factor in who mentioned this as a response, where younger people do not consider it as important compared to older people:
  - Those aged <45 (63% of overall responses)
  - Those aged >45 (37% of overall responses)

*“I don't believe in unnecessary vaccinations and for me the flu vaccination is unnecessary because the flu is only harmful to small segments of the population and for the majority, it's harmless.”*

*Nick, 29, Insurance Claims Assessor, Calamvale (Brisbane), QLD*

*“I think vaccinations for major illnesses such as polio are necessary, but I don't believe that having one for the flu, which changes regularly, is good for the body in the longer term, plus it isn't required for healthy people.”*

*Matthew, 39, Sports Administrator, Orange Grove (Perth), WA*

# Don't believe in unnecessary vaccinations

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## Do not believe in vaccination

- The third reason given by 18% of the population was “Do not believe in vaccination”:
  - Men were the highest group who mentioned this (56% of responses from men compared to 44% from women), particularly men aged 18-35, where 51% mentioned this
- The focus groups provided insight into why people gave this response, to this end almost all said they did not believe in vaccinations per se, instead they did not believe in unnecessary vaccinations and to this segment, the flu vaccination was not necessary as they believe that the flu is not a life-threatening or serious condition.

*“I feel uncomfortable about all vaccinations because they are unnatural, but I accept that the small risks of some are outweighed by the benefits, such as for HPV. However, I don't believe that the flu vaccination is needed for me so I never have it.”*

*NingNing, 33, Real Estate Sales Manager, Albion (Melbourne), VIC*

*“As far as I'm concerned, the only vaccinations that you should have are for diseases that can kill you, such as meningitis. I don't think it's good for you to have a vaccination every year for the flu, unless there is a really bad strain going around like the Spanish flu.”*

*Colin, 45, Physiotherapist, Nollamara (Perth), WA*

## Don't have the time

- The fourth main reason given by 9% of the population was “Don't have the time”:
  - Women aged 36-45 were the highest group who mentioned this, where 17% of responses were from this group

## Other reasons given

- 6% of the population responded with “other” reasons, the most common of these summarised below:
  - Afraid of needles/injections was the most common reason given by 37% of those who responded “other”
  - Difficult to obtain where I live was the next most common reason given by 24% of those who responded “other” with 73% of these people living in regional & rural areas
  - Not being able to afford was the third most common reason given by 21% of those who responded “other”

*“Coming from a grown man, I know you will laugh, but I hate needles and that's the main reason I don't get it.”*

*Robert, 39, Leasing Manager, Oakden (Adelaide), SA*

*“It would cost me about \$80-\$100 to have it by the time I saw a doctor and if everyone in our house had it, multiplied by five and it would cost us \$400-\$500 which is just too much”.*

*Ellen, 59, Caterer, Sunnybank Hills (Brisbane), QLD*

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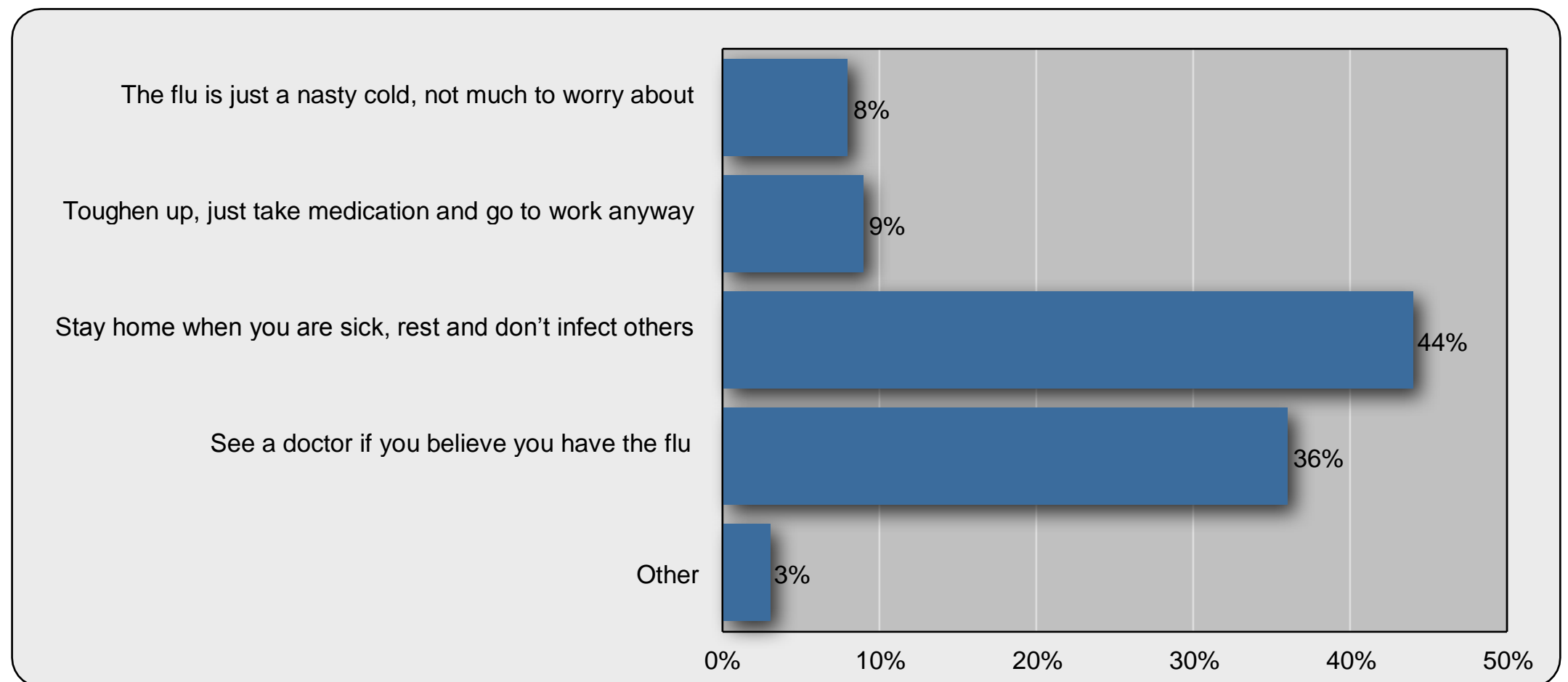
# **Attitudes Towards the Flu**

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# Stay at home, rest, don't infect others

## ***Q4. What is your attitude towards the flu?***

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response was “Stay at home when you are sick, rest and don’t infect others” by 44% of the adult population
  - “See a doctor if you believe you have the flu” was the second most common response by 36%
  - The third most common response was “Toughen up, just take medication and go to work anyway” by 9%
  - “The flu is just a nasty cold, not much to worry about” was the fourth most common response by 8%
  - 3% of the adult population gave an “other” response



# Stay at home and rest or see a Dr

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## Stay at home, rest & don't infect others

- The main reason given by 44% of the population was “Stay at home when you are sick, rest and don't infect others” where:
  - Men mentioned this slightly more than women (53% of responses from men compared to 47% from women)
  - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors

*“Definitely stay at home, rest and don't infect others. I've always disliked people who come into work spreading whatever they have.”*  
Cynthia, 53, Teacher, Millswood (Adelaide), SA

## See a doctor

- The second reason given by 36% of the population was “See a doctor if you believe you have the flu” where:
  - Women were the highest group who mentioned this (57% of responses from women compared to 43% from men) and highest amongst women aged 46-55 where 62% of this group gave this as their response

*“I think the most sensible thing for anyone to do is to see a doctor if they believe they have the flu, it's what I do and I wish more people would do it so it didn't spread so much.”*  
Alison, 49, Solicitor, Red Hill (Canberra), ACT

## Toughen up, take medication and go to work

- The third main reason given by 9% of the population was “Toughen up, take medication and just go to work anyway”:
  - Men mentioned this more than women (62% of responses from men compared to 38% from women)

## The flu is just a nasty cold

- The fourth main reason given by 8% of the population was “The flu is just a nasty cold, not much to worry about”:
  - People from regional & rural areas were the highest group who mentioned this (58% of responses compared to 42% of responses from the larger cities)

## Other reasons given

- 3% of the population responded with “other” reasons, the most common of these summarised below:
  - It's a normal part of winter (39% of those who responded “other”)
  - Only a concern for elderly and those with major illnesses (28% of those who responded “other”)

*“Too much is made of the flu in my opinion. I think it's a normal part of winter in a place like Melbourne. I know many people who think they are dying from the flu, but they just caught a cold, but in saying that, it is dangerous for elderly and people with weak immunity.”*  
Prasad, 36, Business Analyst, Vermont (Melbourne), VIC

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# Who Should Have Flu Shots

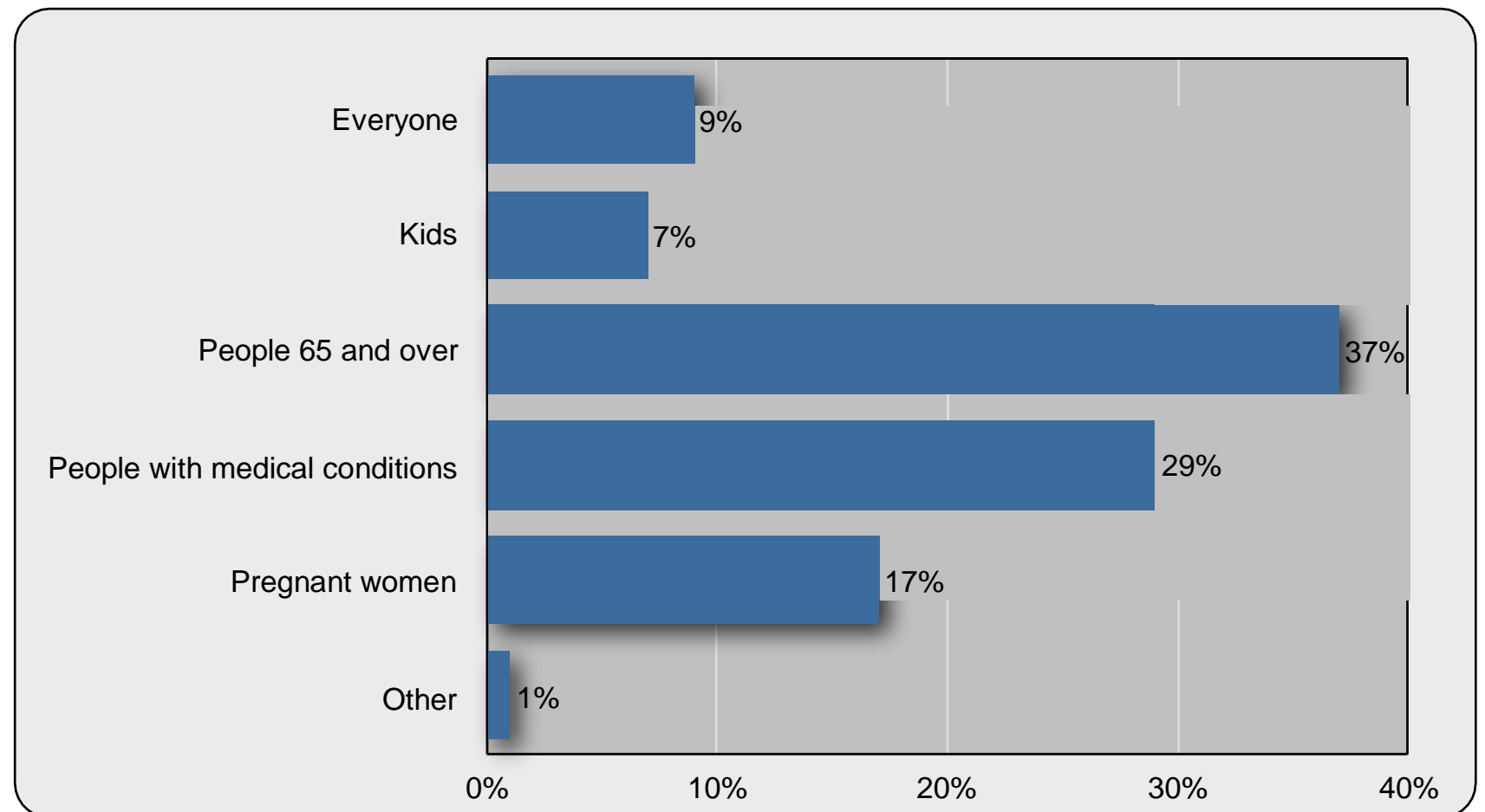
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# People over 65 lead having flu shot

## ***Q5. Who should have a flu shot?***

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response was “People 65 and over” by 37% of the adult population
  - “People with medical conditions” was the second most common response by 29%
  - The third most common response was “Pregnant women” by 17%
  - “Everyone” was the fourth most common response by 9%
  - 7% of the adult population said “Kids” as the fifth highest response
  - 1% answered “other” and gave a different response



# People over 65 & medical conditions

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## People 65 and over

- The majority of the population, 37% overall, responded that “People 65 and over” should have a flu shot:
  - People aged 65+ were the highest group in giving this response, highlighting their awareness, where 61% of the overall responses to this were from those aged 65+
  - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this response

*“I’d say my age group, those aged 65 and over because the flu can be lethal to the elderly, look what happened in nursing homes last year, there was about 10 old people in the one nursing home somewhere in Victoria who all died from it.”*

*Allan, 73, Retiree, Gympie (Sydney), NSW*

*“People aged 65 and over would be those most in need of the flu shot, because they have weaker immune systems and most likely to have other medical conditions which can be exacerbated by having the flu.”*

*Cassandra, 23, Student, Piara Waters (Perth), WA*

## People with medical conditions

- The second main reason given by the 29% of the population was “People with medical conditions” where:
  - There was minimal difference across all demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this response
  - The majority of the focus groups also mentioned this as the second main reason after “People aged 65 and over” and it was evenly mentioned across all types of participants

*“People with medical conditions would be the people who should have a flu shot most of all, such as those with diabetes or immune system conditions such as auto-immune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis which my husband has and he’s told to have a flu shot every year and so do I so I don’t give him the flu.”*

*Megan, 32, Stay at home parent, Amaroo (Canberra), ACT*

*“Firstly would be people who have medical conditions, then people aged over 65, I don’t think the other groups mentioned there kids and pregnant women need it, maybe it is advisable for pregnant women early in their pregnancy if it is safe.”*

*John, 67, Business Owner, Warradale (Adelaide), SA*

# Everyone, kids & pregnant women

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## A little confusion about pregnant women

- The third main reason, given by 17% of the population was “Pregnant women” where:
  - Women who had young children were the main group to give this response, comprising 44% of overall responses
  - The remainder of those who gave this response were very mixed, highlighting findings from the focus groups, where other than women of child bearing age, many people thought it was actually unsafe for pregnant women to have a flu shot

*“I had my son 20 months ago, so I know that it’s important for pregnant women to have it and all the doctors I saw asked if I had it.”*

*Nicole, 36, Travel Consultant, Strathfield (Sydney), NSW*

*“I don’t think it’s safe for pregnant women and I don’t think its good to give it to kids either, but all other groups it would be fine to give to, people over 65 would still be the highest priority in my opinion.”*

*Patrick, 38, Electrician, Clayton South (Melbourne), VIC*

## Everyone

- The third main reason, but given by only 9% of the population was “Everyone” where:
  - Men mentioned this more than women (58% of responses from men compared to 42% from women)
  - Lower income households also mentioned this more, with 55% of all those who mentioned coming from households with annual income <\$50,000

*“Everyone should get one, then it wouldn’t be spread as much as it is and it wouldn’t be as severe as it is.”*

*Craig, 59, Retired, Yennora (Sydney), NSW*

## Confusion concerning kids

- The fourth reason given, however by only 7% of the population was “Kids”:
  - People living in regional and rural areas were those with the highest response to kids (46% of overall responses)
  - Also, people aged 46-55 were high in making response, especially men in this age group
  - The focus groups showed that there was quite a high level of confusion amongst both parents and non-parents about whether kids should have a flu shot

*“I was talking about this with my sister-in-law a few weeks ago, both of us weren’t clear if kids should have a flu shot, my son had a terrible bout of the flu last year and I’m thinking that he should have a flu shot this year.”*

*Yvonne, 46, Account Manager, Eltham (Melbourne), VIC*

*“Kids shouldn’t have it unless they have a medical condition that warrants them requiring it.”*

*Matthew, 39, Sports Administrator, Orange Grove (Perth), WA*

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# **When to Have a Flu Shot**

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# May the most popular

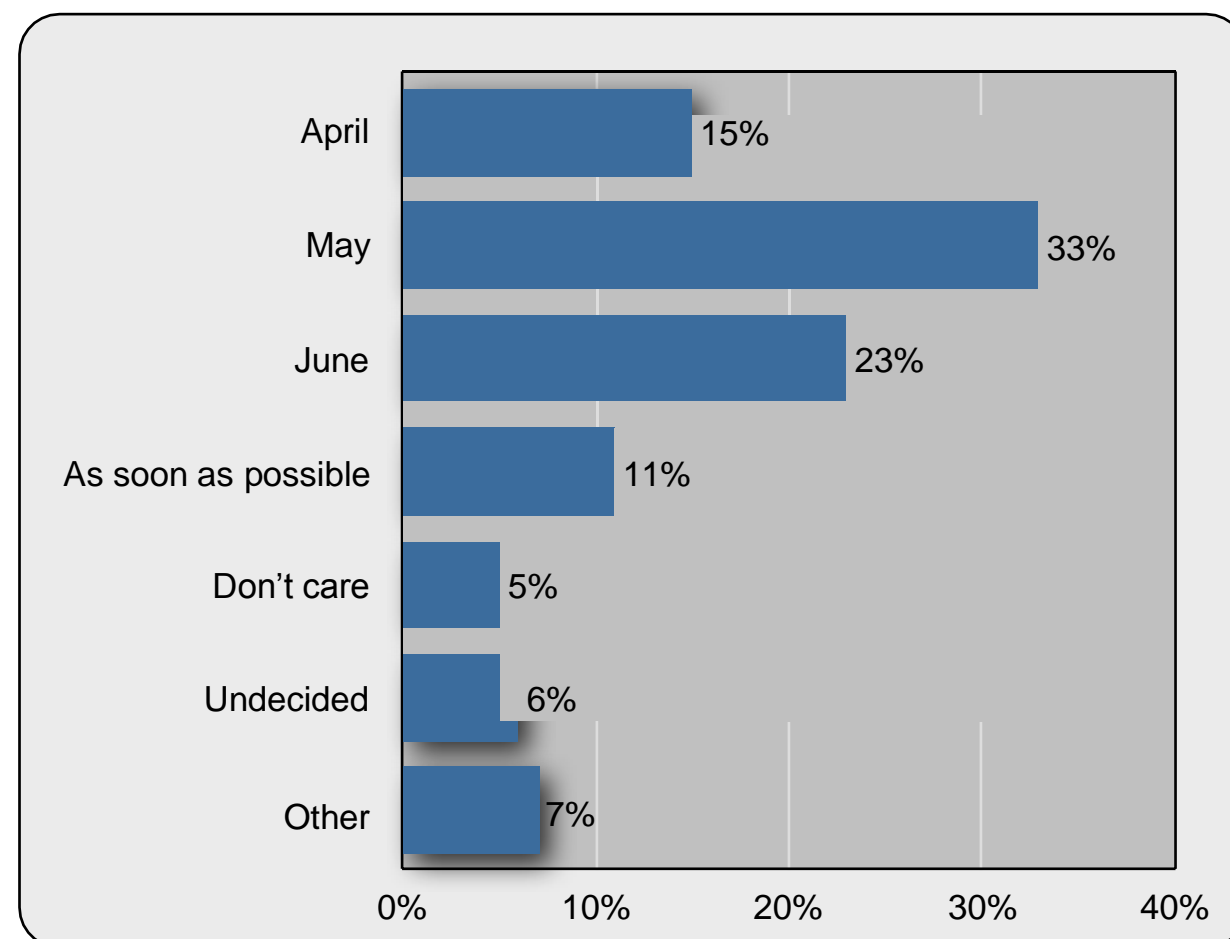
## Q6. When do you plan to get vaccinated?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response was “May” by 33% of the adult population
  - “June” was the second most common response by 23%
  - The third most common response was “April” by 15%
  - “As soon as possible” was the fourth most common response by 11%
  - 7% of the adult population said “Other” as the fifth highest response and provided their own reason
  - 6% answered “Undecided”
  - 5% answered “Don’t care”

### May is the most popular

- The majority of the population, 33% overall, responded that “May” is when they plan to get vaccinated:
  - People aged 65+ were the highest group in giving this response, where 59% of the overall responses to this were from those aged 65+
  - The focus groups found that May was most popular for two main reasons; firstly, it is believed to be the main autumn month and that reminds people winter is coming and to have a flu shot; secondly, it is believed to be the month when the latest flu shot is released

*“I heard that in May the flu shot for this year will be available, so that’s the best time, when you can get the most up-to-date one.”*  
Neil, 49, Property Manager, Kogarah (Sydney), NSW



# Autumn when flu shot available

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## June second most popular

- The second most common response was “June” amongst 23% of the population, where:
  - Younger people (those aged <35 years) were the largest group giving this response (57% of responses compared to 43% of responses from those aged 35+)
  - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors

*“Last year it was June when I had mine, that’s when the medical centre I go to sent a message saying that the flu shot was available, I also heard from a friend that around June is the best time as it is just before the flu season starts to become active.”*

*Miri, 27, Student, Brunswick (Melbourne), VIC*

## April third most popular

- The third most common response was “April” amongst 15% of the population, where:
  - Older men, aged 55+ represented 51% of overall responses
  - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors

## As soon as possible

- The fourth most common response was “As soon as possible” amongst 11% of the population, where:
  - Those in the cities mentioned this more (58% of overall responses from cities compared to 42% from regional and rural areas)
  - Women mentioned this more than men (59% of responses from women compared to 41% from men)

*“As soon as it becomes available would be my answer, I haven’t heard about when this year’s flu shot will be available, this reminds me to check, but it’s usually April-May and I think its best to get it as soon as it’s available not only so you don’t get the flu, but also because some years there is a shortage and it becomes difficult to get.”*

*Karen, 57, University Lecturer, Warrawee (Sydney), NSW*

## When latest flu shot is available

- A noticeable number of people, 7%, gave “Other” as their response.
- Overwhelmingly, 71% of these responses were related to “When the latest flu shot is available”, where:
  - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors
  - These findings mirrored what was mentioned in the focus groups, where around 10% of participants mentioned that they would have a flu shot this year, when the latest one was available

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# Thoughts on the Flu Shot

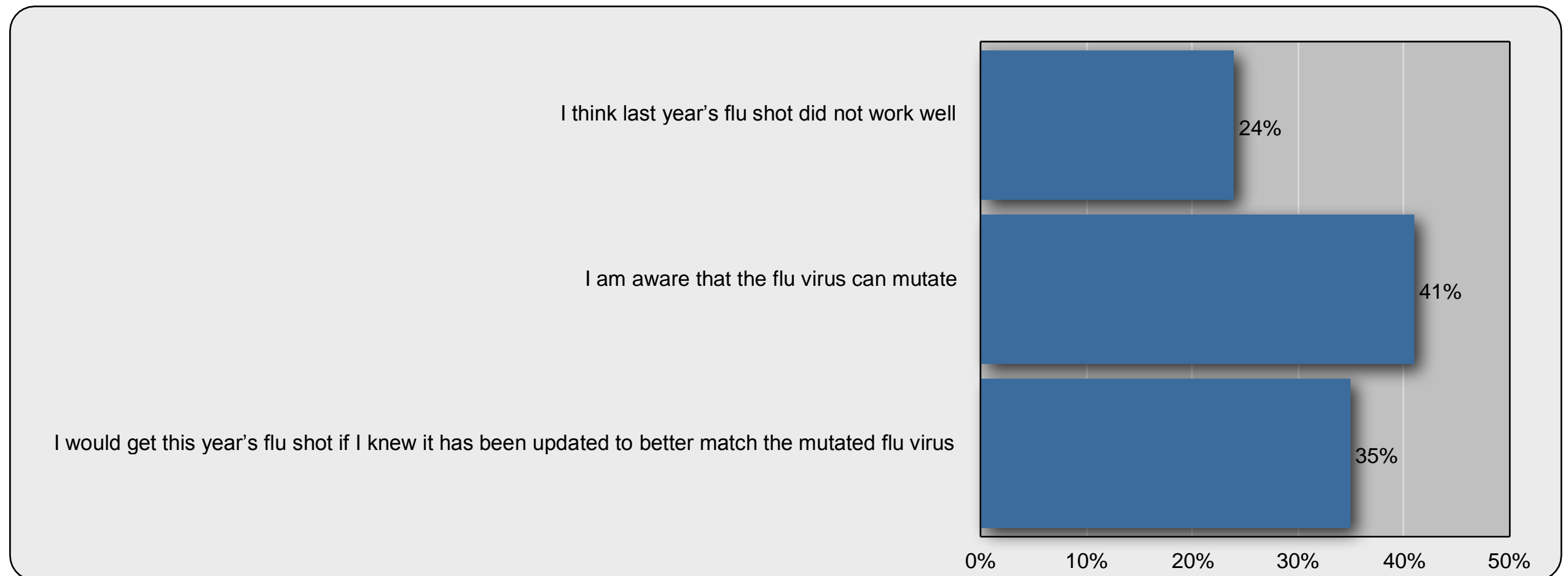
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# Mutation is top of mind

## ***Q7. What are your thoughts on the flu shot?***

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
  - The most common response was “I am aware that the flu virus can mutate” by 41% of the adult population
  - “I would get this year’s flu shot if i knew it has been updated to better match the mutated virus” was the second most common response by 35%
  - The third most common response was “I think last year’s flu shot did not work well” by 24%



# Mutation & desire for latest vaccine

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## High awareness that the flu virus can mutate

- The most common response was “I am aware that the flu virus can mutate” amongst 41% of the population, where:
  - There was minimal difference across all demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this response
  - The focus groups also found this to be the most common response amongst all participants
  - A lot of the discussion in the focus groups was about last year’s flu and how it mutated to become very severe, this being top of mind amongst around half of all participants

*“Last year we saw first hand how the flu virus can mutate and become deadly, I work for an Anglican organisation which provides home care services to elderly and disabled people, last year in our area we had many cases of our clients coming down with the flu because it got so widespread, we encouraged our staff who visit homes to get a flu shot and not to work if they had the flu.”*

*Jan, 56, Homecare Coordinator, Kingsbury (Melbourne), VIC*

## Many would get this year’s flu shot if they knew it had been updated

- The second most common response was “I would get this year’s flu shot if I knew it had been updated to better match the mutated virus” amongst 35% of the population, where:
  - Women mentioned this more than men (56% of responses from women compared to 44% from men)
  - Those in cities were also more likely to mention (53% of overall responses from those in cities compared to 47% from those in regional and rural areas)
  - The focus groups also found this to be the second most common response amongst all participants
  - Focus group participants were very vocal concerning this response, again showing that last year’s flu was still top of mind amongst many, where around one-third mentioned without being prompted, that they would get a flu shot this year, once they know when it will be available, with around two-thirds mentioning that they had not heard of a new vaccine being available for this year as of the first week of April

*“I will only get a flu shot this year when I know that it’s the latest version to cover me against the most up-to-date strain, it’s bad enough to have to get it and feel a bit sick a few days after having it, so I want to have the latest one...actually, I haven’t heard anything about a new version being available yet, has anybody else?”*

*Nils, 27, Sales Manager, Coorparoo (Brisbane), QLD*

# Last year didn't work well

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## Last year's flu shot did not work well

- The third most common response was “I think last year's flu shot did not work well” amongst 24% of the population, where:
  - The main difference amongst those who gave this response was a slight skew towards more men than women with 53% of responses from men compared to 47% of responses from women
  - There was minimal difference across other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this as their response
  - The focus groups had two main topics that were raised pertaining to this response; firstly, just over half acknowledged that the reason for last year's flu shot not working well was because the virus mutated considerably throughout the winter; secondly, a small number of participants in each focus group mentioned that because last year's flu shot did not work well, as a result of the virus mutating, as mentioned previously, these people believed that this was likely to occur again this winter, consequently they were reluctant to have a flu shot until later in the winter, once it is better known just how severe it is this year

*“As a Dental Nurse, I work at the front line of the flu...it was very well known by around August last year that the flu shot wasn't effective against what was going around...this year I will have to have the flu shot as soon as it becomes available, which I think will be next week from what I heard a few days ago.”*

*Elsie, 32, Dental Nurse, Heathridge (Perth), WA*

*“I was really sick last year, the worst I've ever been in my life and I had a flu shot, so I don't think it worked at all, this year I'm not sure if I will get one or not.”*

*Patcharee, 25, Concierge, Pyrmont (Sydney), NSW*



# Contact Details

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