

Healthcare & Medical Research Study
Australian General Population

April 2019



Prepared for the Immunisation Coalition

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Questions

Commissioned Questions

Questions Included in the Research (Qualitative & Quantitative)

- Q1. Did you get an influenza vaccination in 2018?
- Q2. What was the main reason for getting an influenza vaccination?
- Q3. What was your main reason for not getting an influenza vaccination?
- Q4. Do you intend to get an influenza vaccination this year?
- Q5. What is your main reason for intending to get an influenza vaccination this year?
- Q6. What is your main reason for not intending to get an influenza vaccination this year?
- Q7. Did you have influenza last year?
- Q8. What is your attitude towards influenza?
- Q9. Who or what influences your decision on having an influenza vaccination?
- Q10. Who should have an influenza vaccination?
- Q11. When do you plan to get vaccinated?
- Q12. What are your thoughts on the influenza vaccination?
- Q13. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” pose a risk to public health in Australia?
- Q14. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” pose a risk to the health of you and your family?
- Q15. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” get too much media coverage?

Methodology

Overview

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.
- 15,182 respondents participated in the survey, apportioned as:
 - Qualitative research (focus groups): 92
 - Quantitative research (telephone interviews & online survey): 15,090

Methodology

- 8 focus groups, comprising 10-12 respondents in each, undertaken in:
 - Sydney - Adelaide - Canberra
 - Melbourne - Perth - Darwin
 - Brisbane - Hobart
- 1,017 telephone interviews, average of 15 minutes duration, undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.
- 14,073 online interviews, average of 21 minutes duration, undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.

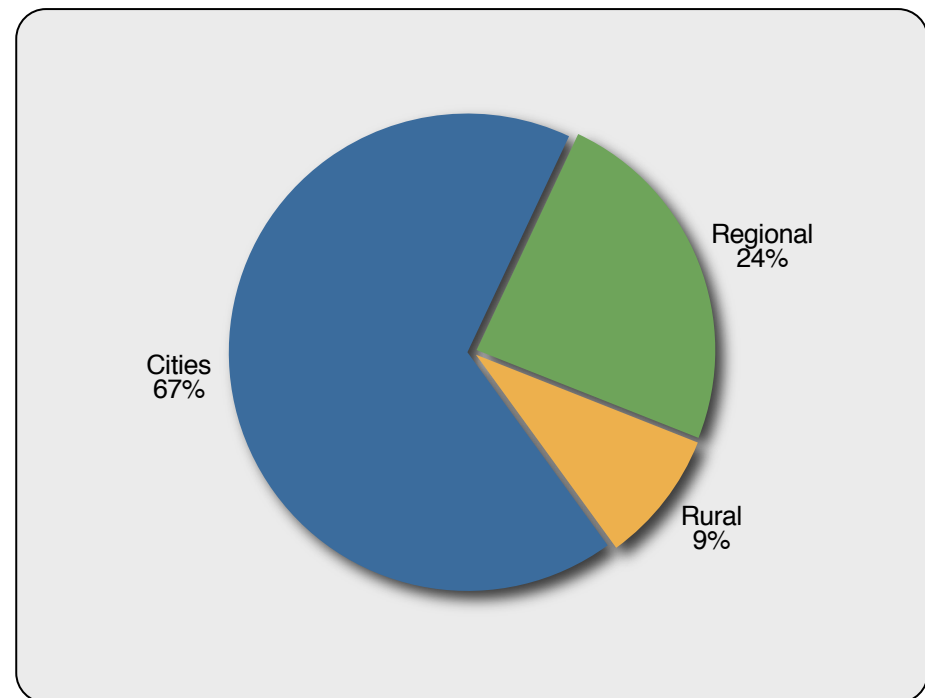
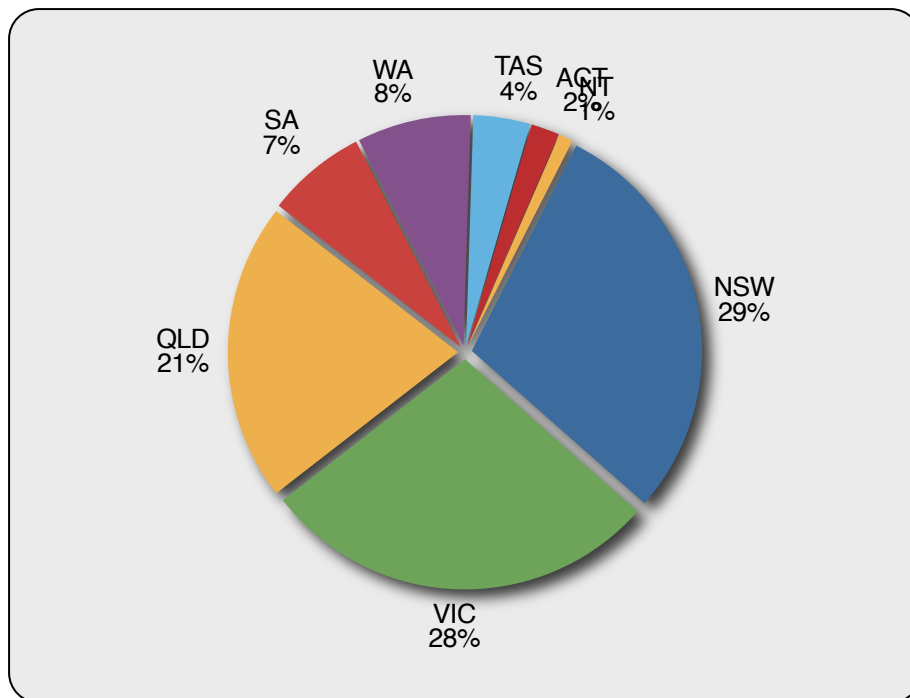
Data Collection

- Focus Groups:
 - 21st March to 28th March
- Telephone & Online Survey:
 - 29th March to 4th April

Geographic Coverage

National Representative Sample

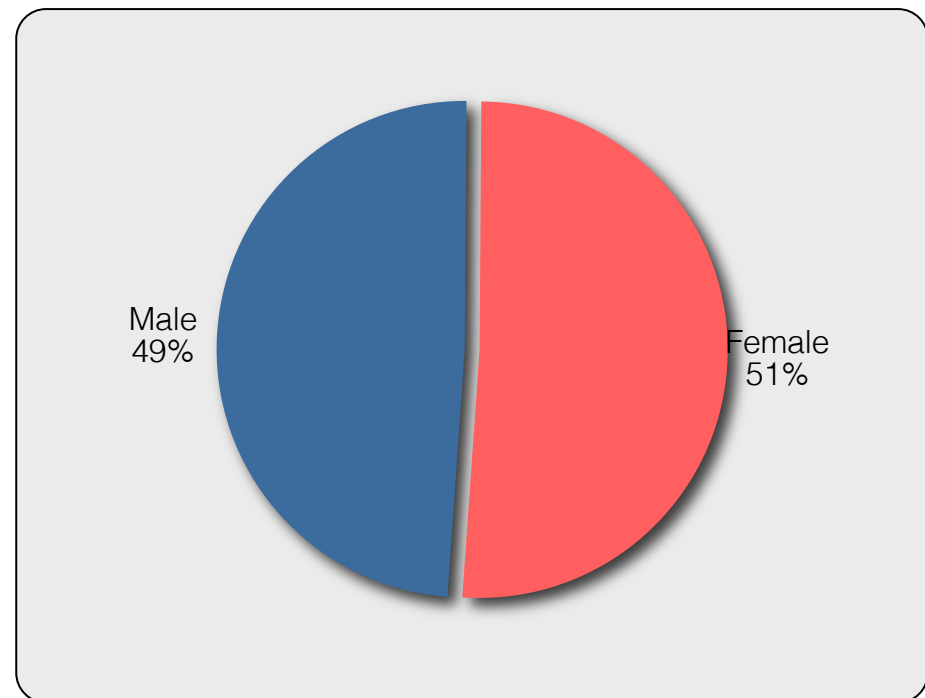
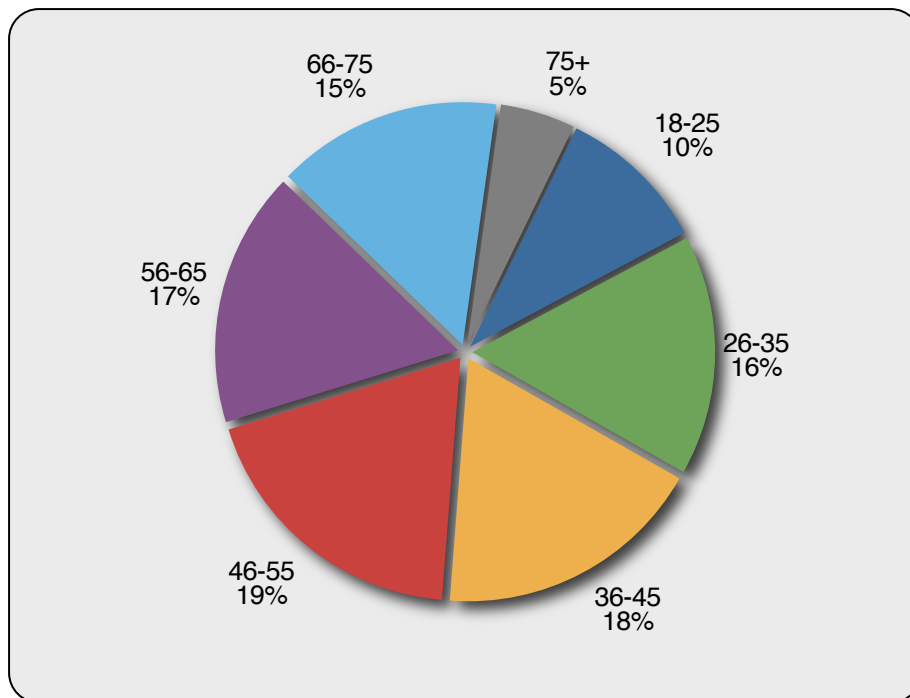
- Interviews were undertaken in all capital cities, main regional cities and a large number of regional and rural towns in all states and territories.
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken are illustrated in the charts below, presented amongst all states and territories and amongst capital cities,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



Age & Gender

National Representative Sample

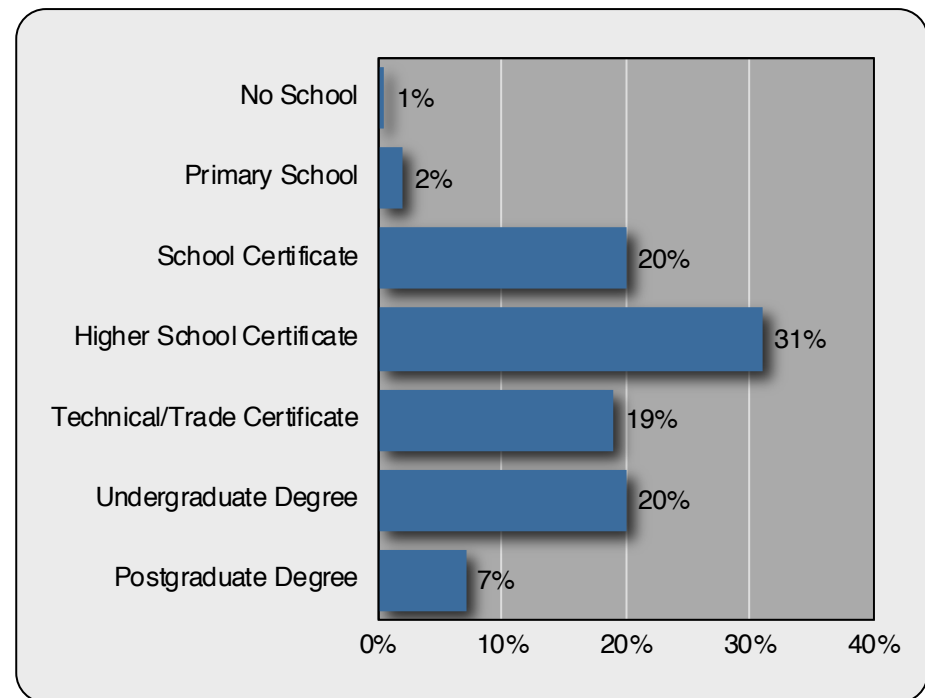
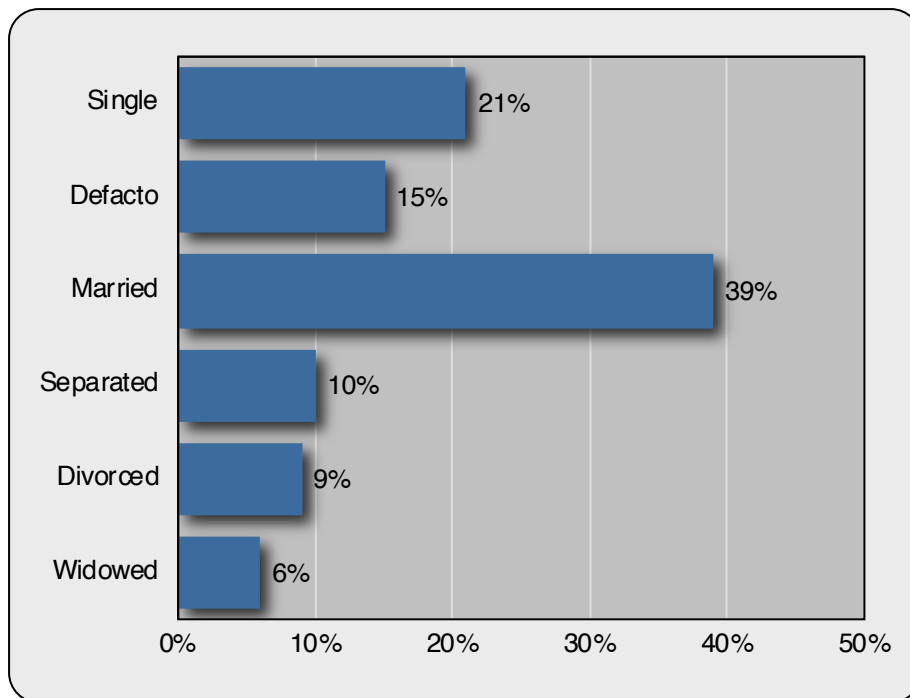
- Interviews undertaken were amongst a representative sample of the Australian population aged 18+ years of age.
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken amongst the age groups used throughout the study and gender are illustrated in the charts below.



Demographic Factors

Marital Status & Education

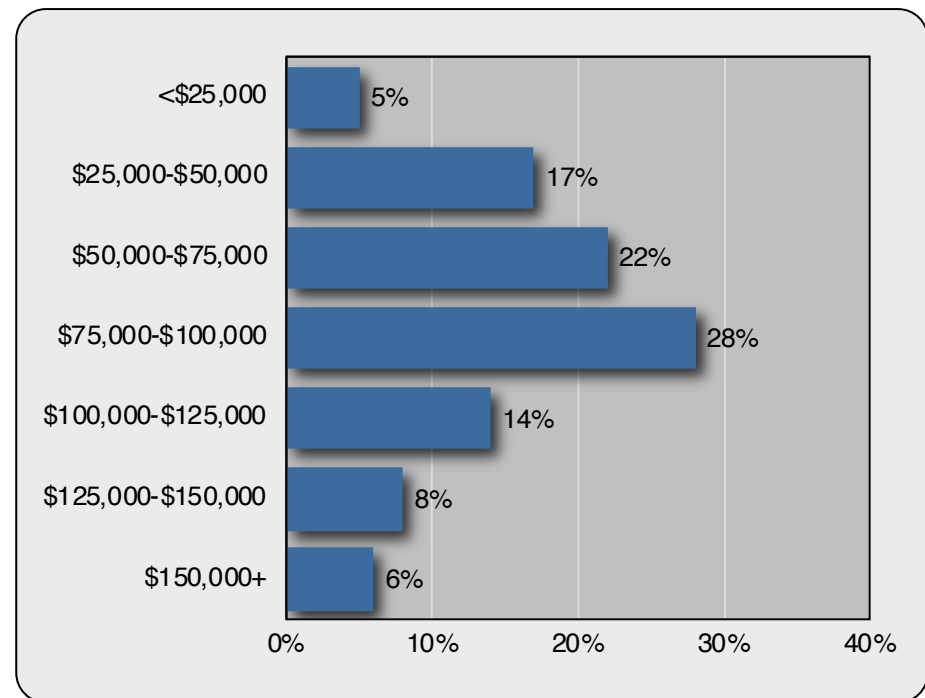
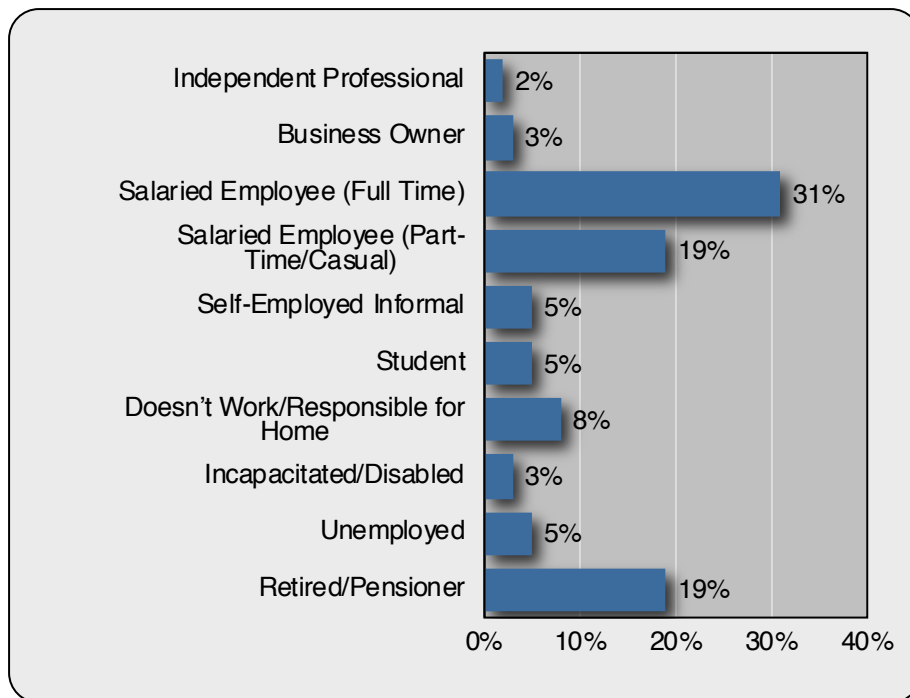
- Interviews were undertaken amongst a representative sample of the Australian adult population, based on key demographic factors, these being:
 - Marital status
 - Highest level of education
- The apportionment of interviews undertaken amongst these two key demographic factors are illustrated in the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



Incidence of the Influenza Vaccination in 2018

37% had an influenza vaccination

Q1. Did you get an influenza vaccination in 2018?

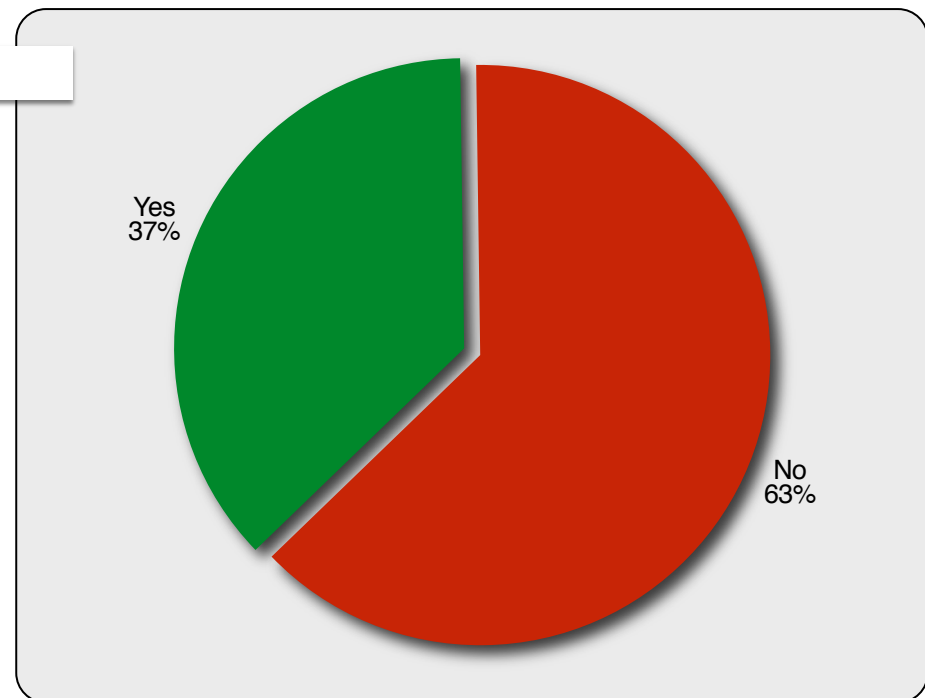
- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - 37% of the adult population answered “Yes”
 - 63% of the population answered “No”

Women aged 55+ had the highest incidence

- Out of the total adult population, the segment which had the highest incidence of receiving the influenza vaccination in 2018 were women aged 55+:
 - 71% of this group answered “Yes”

“I had the flu shot last year, I’ve been having it almost every year for probably the last 10 years, my GP insists that I have it.”

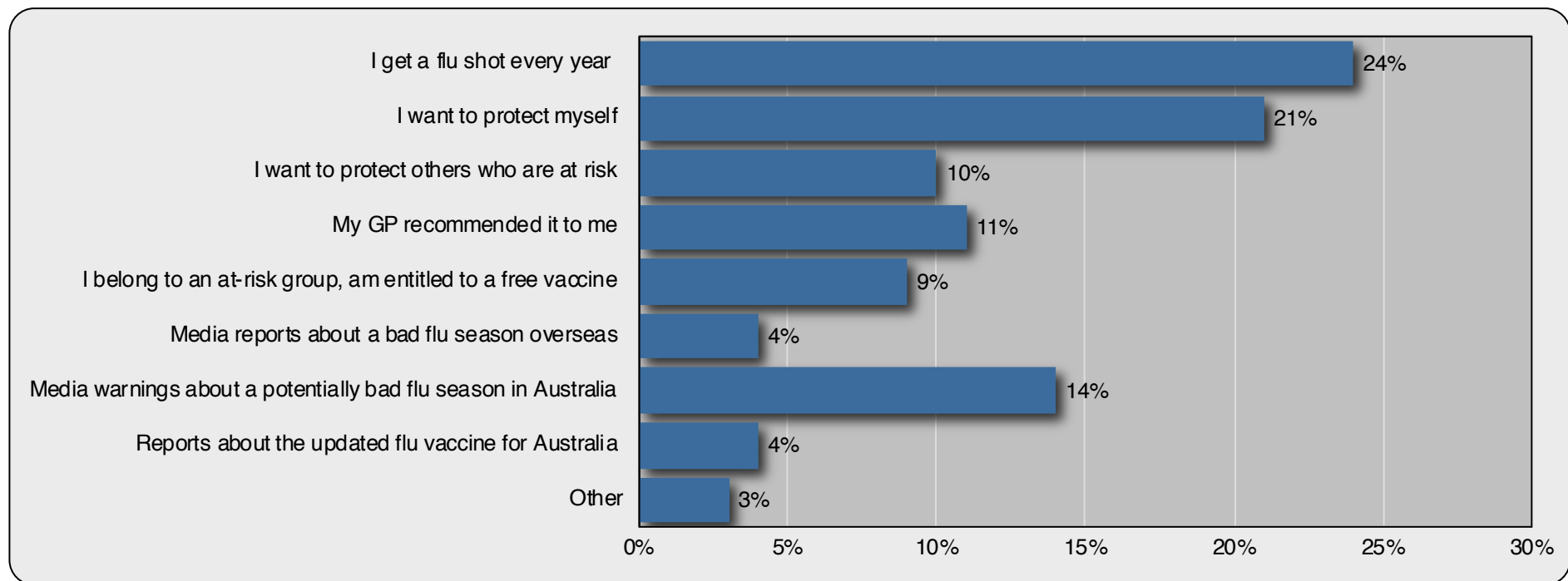
Pam, 76, Retired, Turrumurra (Sydney), NSW



Out of habit and protecting myself

Q2. What was the main reason for getting an influenza vaccination?

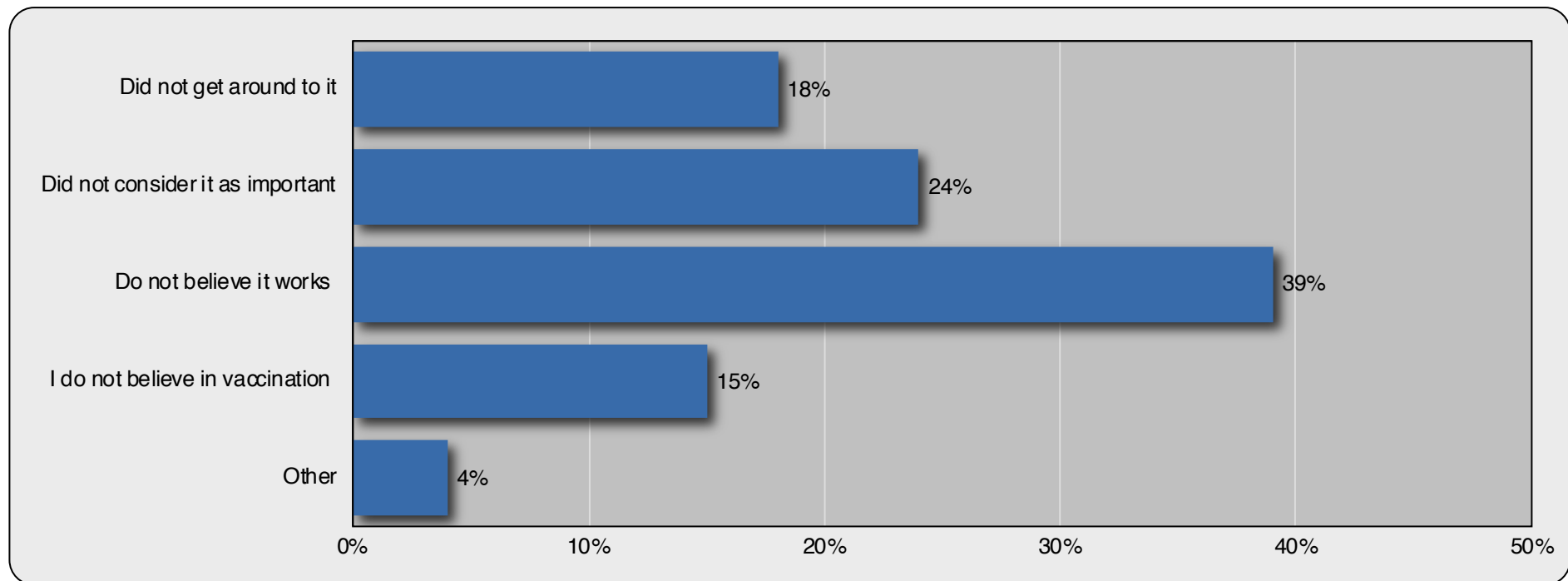
- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response was “I get a flu shot every year” by 24% of the adult population
 - “I want to protect myself” was the second most common response by 21%
 - “Media warnings about a potentially bad flu season in Australia” the third next most common amongst 14%
 - “My GP recommended it to me” was the next most common response by 11%
 - “I want to protect others who are at risk” the next most common response amongst 10%
 - The next most common response was “I belong to an at-risk group, am entitled to a free vaccine amongst 9%



Not believing it works main reason

Q3. What was the main reason for not getting an influenza vaccination?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response, amongst 39% of the adult population was “Do not believe it works”
 - The second most common response was “Did not consider it as important” amongst 24% of the adult population
 - “Did not get around to it” was the third most common response amongst 18% of the adult population
 - “I do not believe in vaccination” was the fourth common response amongst 15% of the adult population
 - 4% responded with “other” stating a different reason



Intention of Having Influenza Vaccination in 2019

39% of adults intend to get flu shot

Q4. Do you intend to get a flu shot this year?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - 39% of the adult population answered "Yes"
 - 61% of the population answered "No"

Women aged 55+ have the highest intention

- Similar to the results for this question in 2018, the segment of the population with the highest intention of having an influenza vaccination this year are women aged 55+, where:
 - 72% of this age group intend to have the influenza vaccination this year

"I will have it again this year, I have it every year and because of my age I think it's wise that I do."

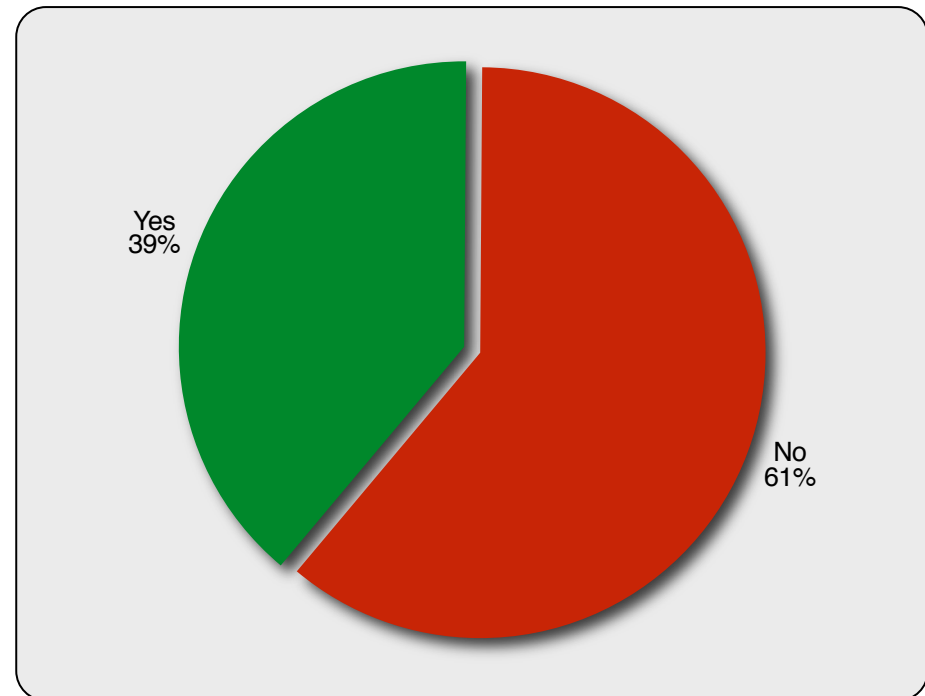
Helen, 75, Retired, Chester Hill (Sydney), NSW

Young men have the lowest intention

- Similar to the results for this question in 2018, the segment of the population with the lowest intention of having an influenza vaccination this year are young men aged 18-25, where:
 - 19% of this age group intend to have the influenza vaccination this year

"I've never had it before and I don't think I will get it this year, my immunity is pretty strong and I don't think I need it."

Max, 22, Student, Hackett (Canberra), ACT



Much higher amongst females

Women in full-time employment very high

- The second highest segment of the population intending to have a influenza vaccination is women who are in full-time employment:
 - 65% intend to have a influenza vaccination

"Yes, I have it every year and I will have it again this year, I was reminded a few nights ago when there was a warning on the TV news that this year could be a bad one again."

Sheila, 37, Call Centre Manager, Nudgee Beach (Brisbane) QLD

Parents of young children also high

- The third highest segment of the population intending to have a influenza vaccination is parents with school-age children:
 - 62% intend to have a influenza vaccination

"My wife arranges this most years so I'm sure I will be having it along with our Children."

Sandeep, 41, Service Technician, Croydon (Melbourne) VIC

Middle-aged men regional & rural areas lowest

- The segment of the population with the lowest intention of having a influenza vaccination this year are middle aged men (aged 35-45) living in regional & rural areas:
 - 26% intend to have a influenza vaccination

Lower income & regional & rural areas very low

- The second lowest segment of the population intending to have a influenza vaccination are those from households with annual income <\$50,000 in regional & rural areas:
 - 29% intend to have a influenza vaccination

Regional & rural areas very low

- Regardless of household income, those in regional & rural areas were the third lowest segment:
 - 34% intend to have a influenza vaccination

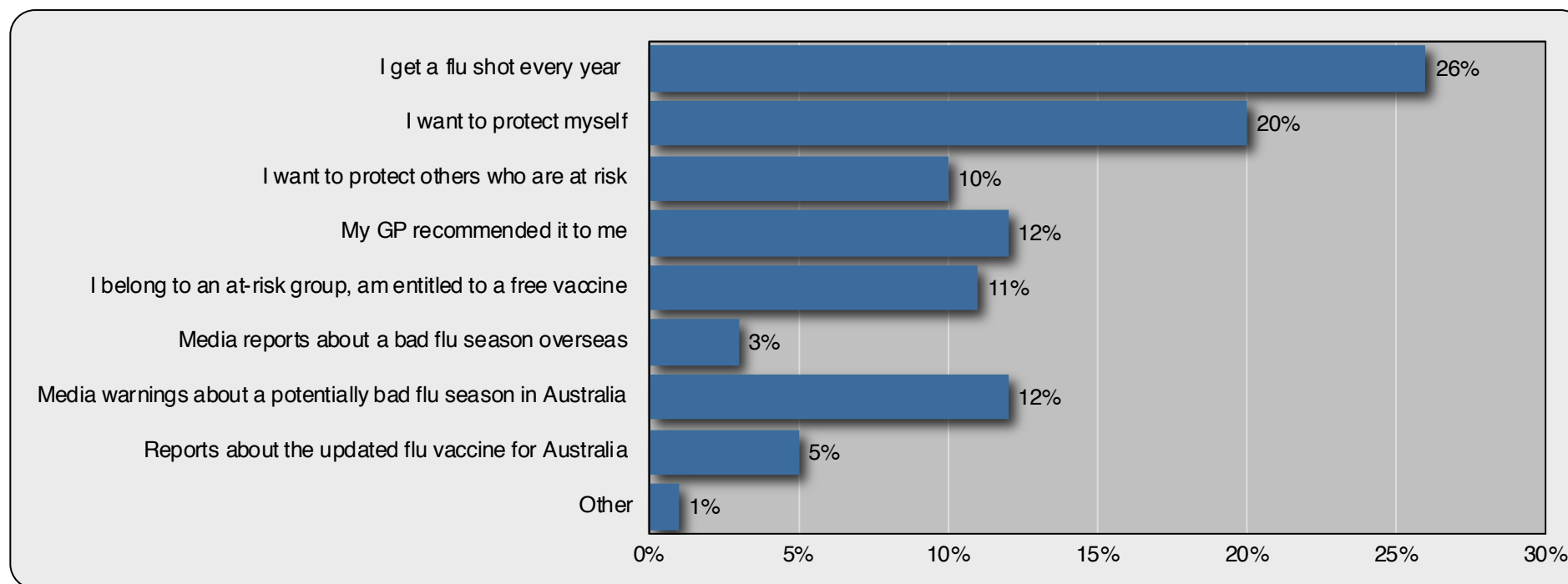
"I had one a few years ago and I don't think it did much, I'm lucky and don't get sick, plus I don't think the strain this year will be too bad so I won't get one."

James, 36, Delivery Driver, Moonah (Hobart) TAS

Out of habit and protecting myself

Q5. What is your main reason for intending to get an influenza vaccination 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 26% of the adult population
 - “I want to protect myself” was the second most common response by 20%
 - “My GP recommended it to me” was the third most common response by 12%, equal with “media warnings about a potentially bad flu season in Australia”
 - The next most common response was “I belong to an at-risk group, am entitled to a free vaccine amongst 11%



Habit and protecting myself lead

Habit for the majority

- The main reason for intending to get a influenza vaccination this year, given by 26% of the adult population was “I get a flu shot every year”:
 - Similar to 2018, it was clear that habit was a major factor amongst those who intend to have an influenza vaccination 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 it every year, my mother and GP both remind me to do it and I never really get bad flu so it must be working.”
Anita, 39, Product Manager, Leederville (Perth) WA

Protecting myself

- The second main reason given this year amongst 20% of the adult population was “I want to protect myself”:
 - People in the focus groups found consensus that the strains of flu going around are generally strengthening and that its wise to get a flu shot to protect oneself
 - Another reason given was that the cost of a flu shot being around \$15-20 is a lot cheaper than a visit to a pharmacy to buy medicines once you have the flu

“I just prefer not to get it and having a flu shot reduces my risk a lot of getting it, plus as I’m self-employed, if I was laid up with the flu for a few days it would cost me a lot in lost income not to mention the cost of buying medicines.”

Wade, 48, Painter, Banyo (Brisbane) QLD

At-risk groups and GP recommendations

- GP recommendation was the equal third reason given by 12% of the adult population.

“My GP recommends me to have it, I have heart disease so I’m at high risk and I get the flu shot for free, so I have it.”

Richard, 79, Retiree, Garran (Canberra) ACT

Media warnings

- The equal third main reason was found to be “Media warnings about a potentially bad flu season in Australia” given by 12% of the adult population:
 - Women aged 36-45 were the highest group which mentioned this, with 19% giving this response, followed by women aged 46-55 with 17% giving this response
 - Young men aged 18-25 were the lowest group, with 7% giving this response

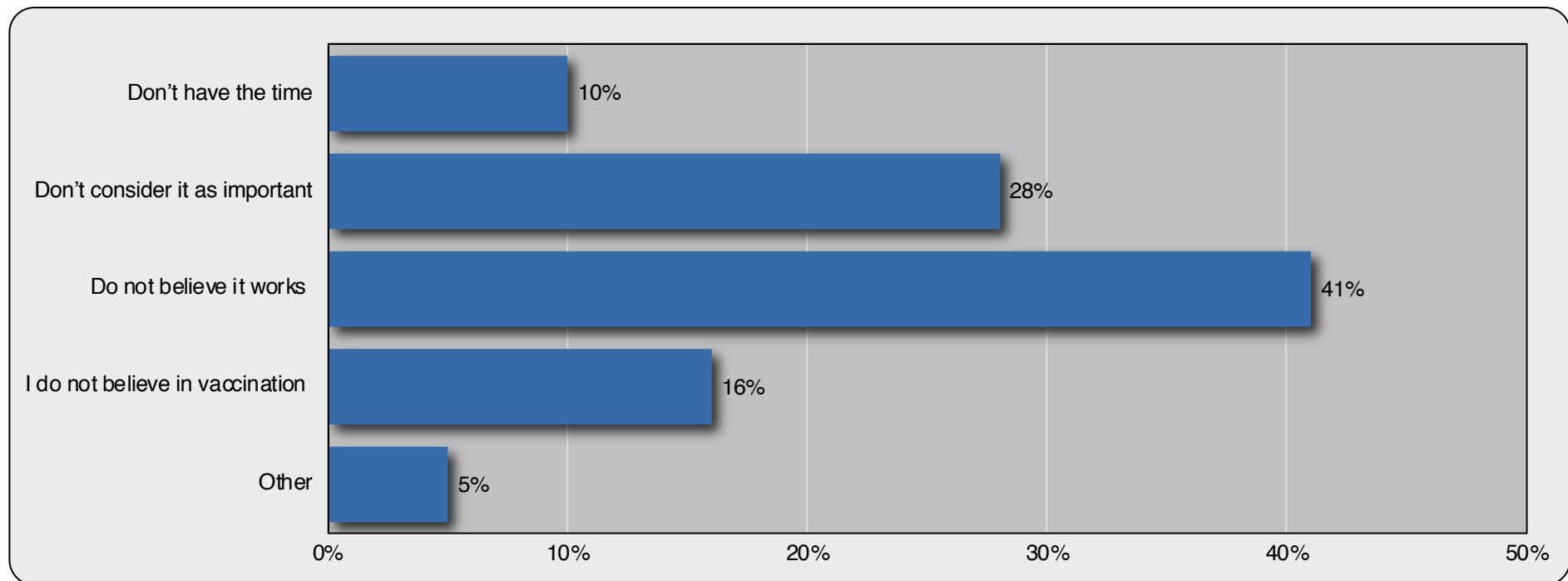
“Every year there is a warning in the media where a doctor is warning that this coming winter is going to be a bad flu season, so that’s what reminds me to have a flu shot with my GP.”

Fiona, 46, Property Manager, Balcatta (Perth) WA

Do not believe it works

Q6. 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 41% of the adult population was “Do not believe it works”
 - The second most common response was “Do not consider it as important” amongst 28% of the adult population
 - “I do not believe in vaccination” was the third most common response amongst 16% of the adult population
 - “Don’t have the time” was the fourth most common response amongst 10% of the adult population
 - 5% responded with “other” stating a different reason, these being summarised below.



Don't believe it works & not important

Do not believe it works

- The main reason given by 41% of the population was “Do not believe it works”:
 - Men were the highest group who mentioned this (58% of responses from men compared to 42% from women), particularly men aged 55-64 where 61% 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

“I don't think it can be good for you getting these flu shots every year, personally I think that it has to have a negative effect on the body and become less and less effective over time.”

Richard, 60, Chef, Thorneside (Brisbane) QLD

Do not consider as important

- The second main reason given by 28% of the population was “Do not consider it as important”:
 - Men were the highest group who mentioned this (59% of responses from men compared to 41% from women), with age also being a factor where 60% of young men aged 18-35 mentioned this
- Age being the significant factor in those who mentioned this as a response, similar to in 2018, where younger people do not consider it as important compared to older people:
 - Those aged <45 (66% of overall responses)
 - Those aged >45 (34% of overall responses)

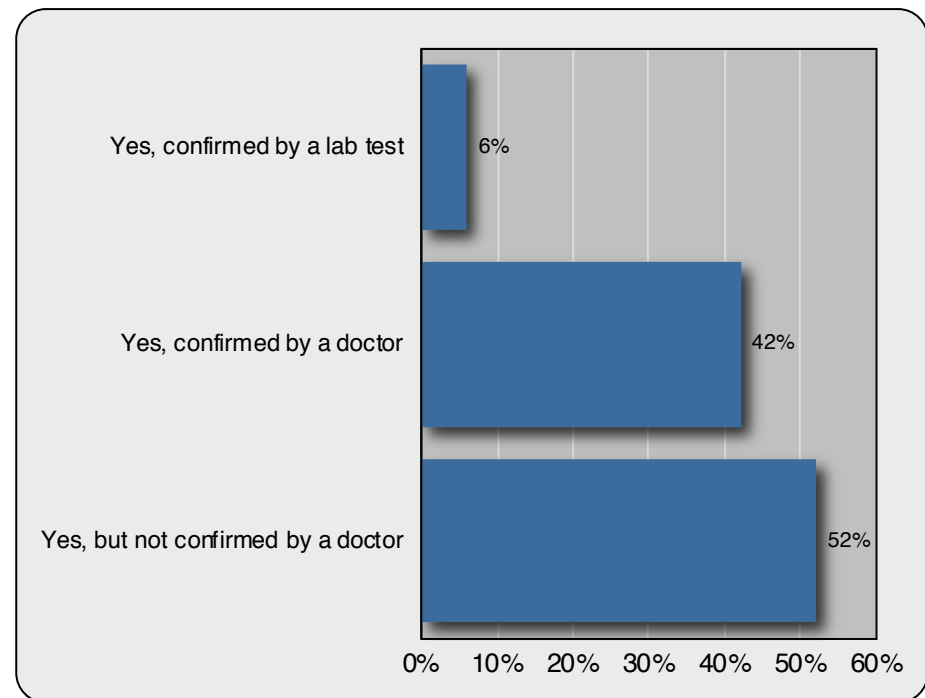
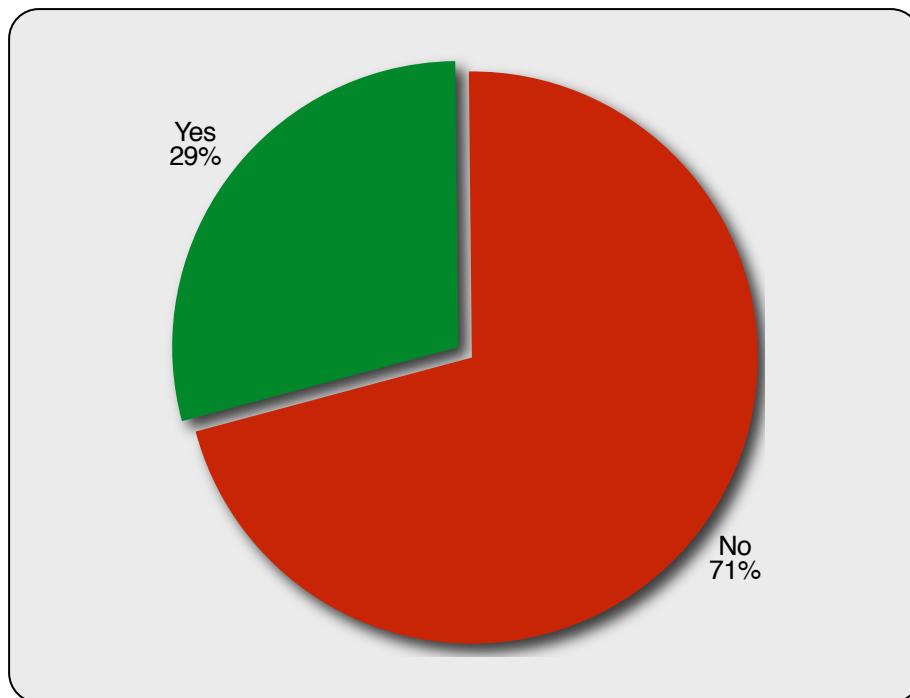
“To me and I think people my age, it's no important, if you are young and healthy you don't need it.”

Jon, 27, Web Developer, Glebe (Sydney) NSW

29% had influenza last year

Q7. Did you have influenza last year?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the bottom left chart, were:
 - 29% of the adult population answered “Yes”
 - 71% of the population answered “No”
- Of the 29% who answered “Yes”, how they know they had influenza is illustrated in the bottom right chart, where:
 - 6% had it confirmed by a lab test
 - 42% had it confirmed by a doctor
 - 52% are sure they had it but it this was not confirmed by a doctor as they didn’t see one

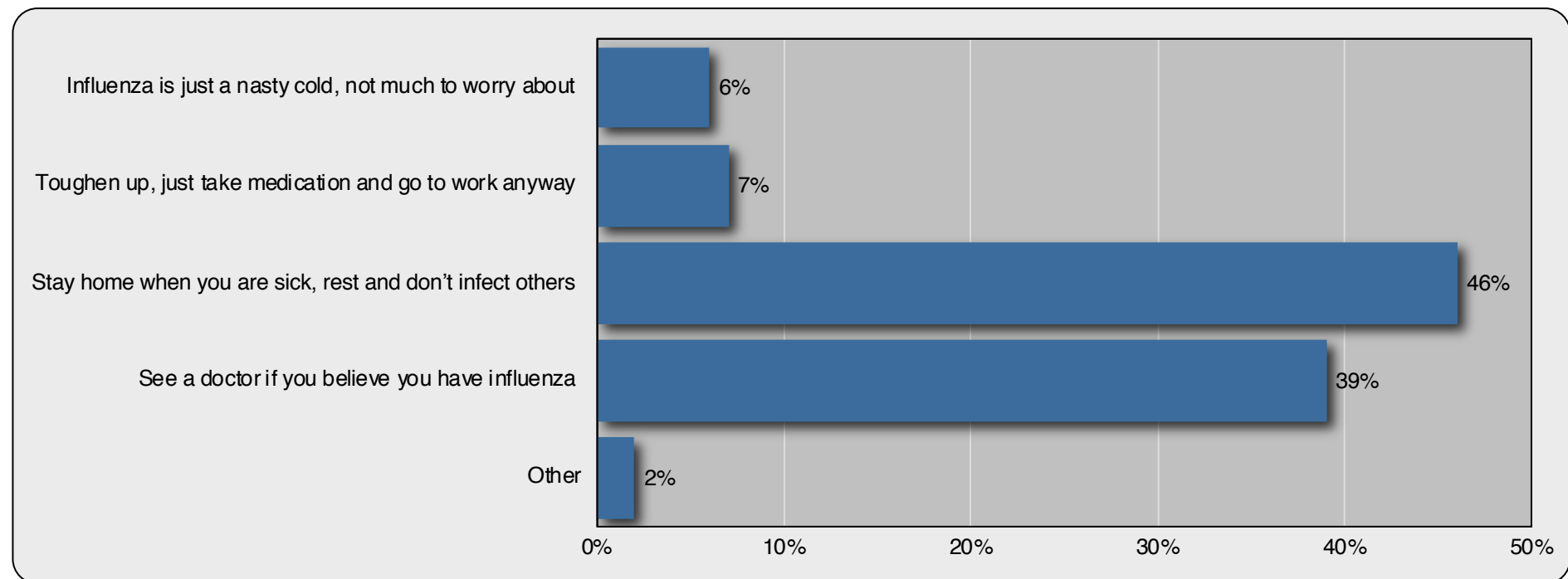


Attitudes Towards Influenza

Stay at home, rest, don't infect others

Q8. What is your attitude towards influenza?

- 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 46% of the adult population
 - “See a doctor if you believe you have influenza” was the second most common response by 39%
 - The third most common response was “Toughen up, just take medication and go to work anyway” by 7%
 - “Influenza is just a nasty cold, not much to worry about” was the fourth most common response by 6%
 - 2% of the adult population gave an “other” response



Stay at home & rest or see a doctor

Stay at home, rest & don't infect others

- The main reason given by 46% of the adult population was “Stay at home when you are sick, rest and don't infect others” where:
 - Men mentioned this slightly more than women (51% of responses from men compared to 49% from women)
 - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors

“I'd say stay at home, rest and don't infect others, most people without other health problems can get by without seeing a doctor and they are better off keeping away from people and spreading it.”

Christopher, 42, Portfolio Manager, Clarinda (Melbourne) VIC

See a doctor

- The second reason given by 39% of the adult population was “See a doctor if you believe you have the flu” where:
 - Women were the highest group who mentioned this (58% of responses from women compared to 42% from men) and highest amongst women aged 46-55 where 59% of this group gave this response

“My mother had phenomena in the latter stages of her life a few years ago which was Brough on by the flu, so I'm personally very affected by it and know how dangerous it can be for some people, so seeing a doctor is my answer.”

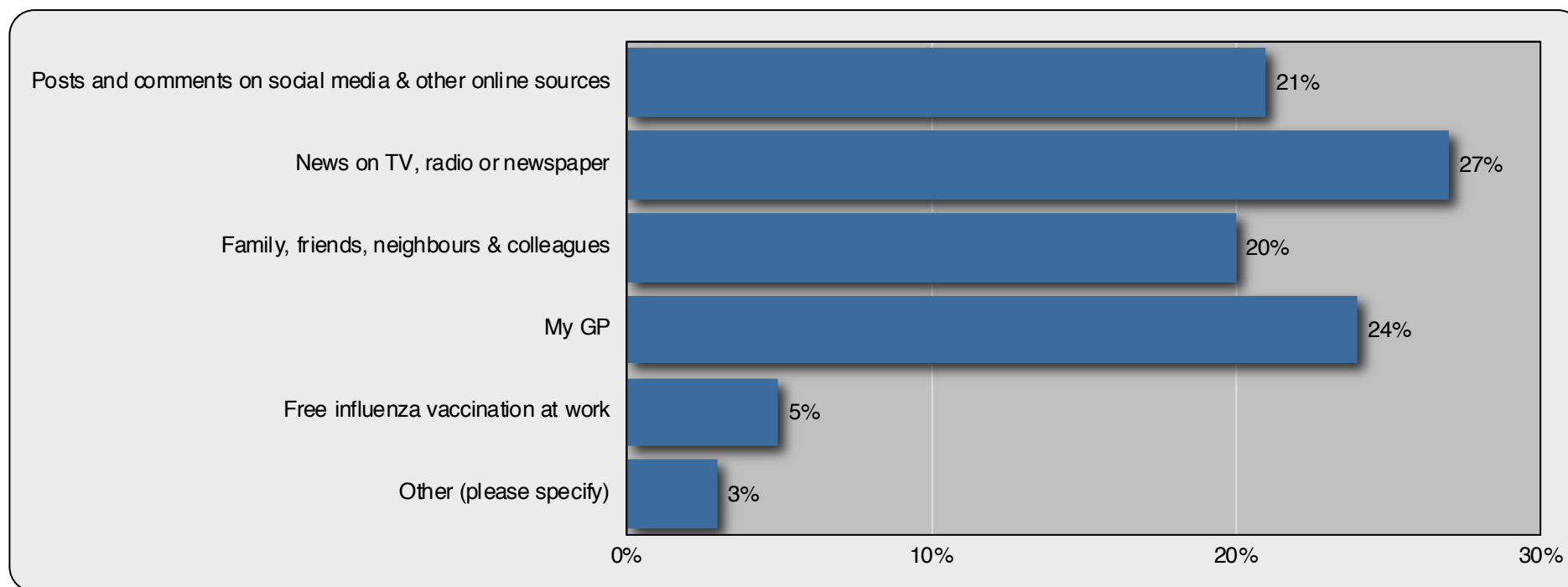
Tara, 57, Caterer, Erskinvillle (Sydney) NSW

Influences Towards Having the Influenza Vaccination

Traditional media, social media & GP

Q9. Who, or what, influences your decision on having an influenza vaccination?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response, amongst 27% of the adult population was “News on TV, radio or newspaper”
 - The second most common response was “My GP” amongst 24% of the adult population
 - “Posts and comments on social media & other online sources” was the third most common response amongst 21% of the adult population
 - “Family, friends, neighbours & colleagues” was the fourth most common response amongst 20% of the adult population
 - 5% responded with “free influenza vaccination at work”.
 - 3% responded with “other” influences.

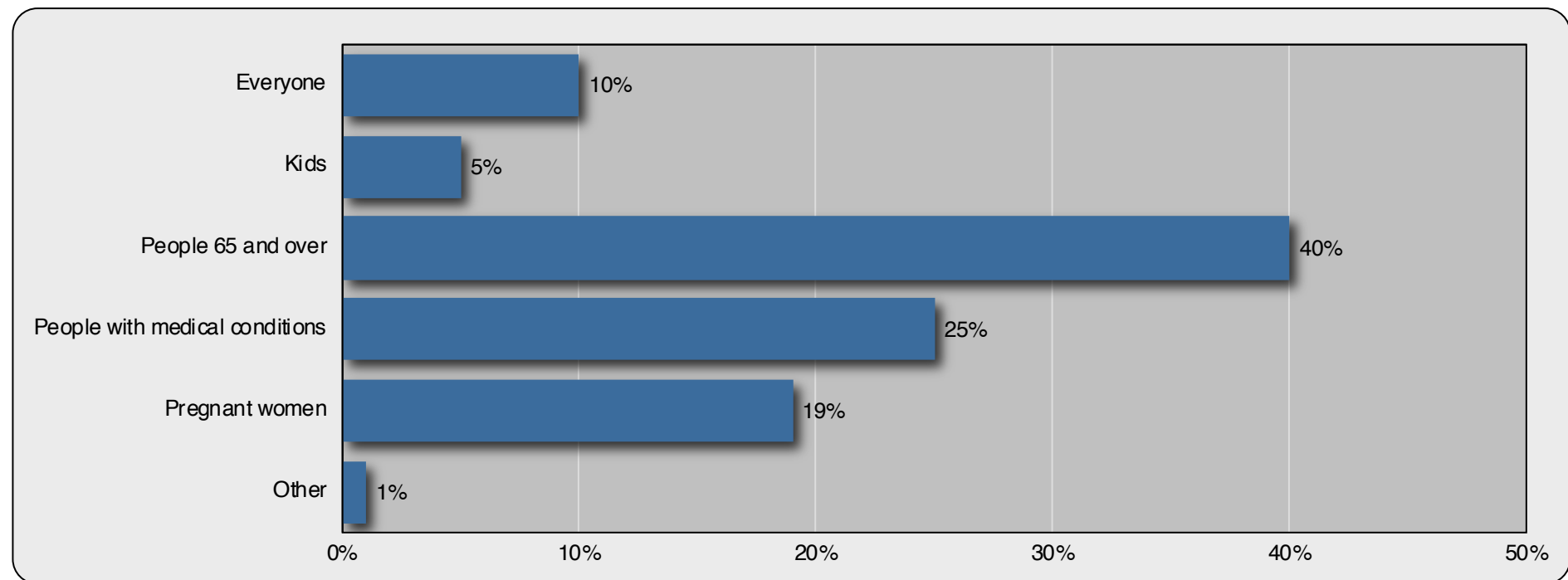


Who Should Have the Influenza Vaccination

People over 65 lead having flu shot

Q10. Who should have an influenza vaccination?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response was “People 65 and over” by 40% of the adult population
 - “People with medical conditions” was the second most common response by 25%
 - The third most common response was “Pregnant women” by 19%
 - “Everyone” was the fourth most common response by 10%
 - 5% of the adult population said “Kids” as the fifth highest response
 - 1% answered “other” and gave a different response



People over 65 & medical conditions

People 65 and over

- The majority of the adult population, 40% 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 62% 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’m over 65 and I know that I am recommended to have a flu shot and I think the government makes it free for me.”

Julia, 67, Business Owner, Bayview (Darwin) NT

People with medical conditions

- The second main reason given by 25% of the adult population was “People with medical conditions” where:
 - People aged 45+ were the highest group in giving this response, highlighting their awareness, where 63% of the overall responses to this were from those aged 45+
 - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this response

“Yes, people with medical conditions are the ones who should have the flu shot, my partner has diabetes and he is told that he has to have the flu shot each year because of his lower immunity.”

Craig, 57, Media & Public Relations Manager, Prahran (Melbourne) VIC

Pregnant women, everyone & kids

Pregnant women

- The third main reason, given by 19% of the population was “Pregnant women” where:
 - Women who had young children were the main group to give this response, comprising 48% 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, similar to the findings from 2018

“It is recommended to have the flu shot when pregnant, well it was for me when I was pregnant 3 years ago and the state government does a campaign about it each year.”

Isabelle, 38, Purchasing Coordinator, Rosslyn Park (Adelaide) SA

Everyone

- The third main reason, but given by 10% of the adult population was “Everyone” where:
 - Men mentioned this more than women (61% of responses from men compared to 39% from women)

“If it was given to everyone then that would be ideal, there would not be much of it spreading like it does in some years.”

Neil, 32, Real Estate Agent, Victoria Park (Perth) WA

Confusion concerning kids

- The fourth reason given, however by only 5% of the population was “Kids”:
 - Highest amongst men aged 46-65 (accounted for 67% of all responses)
 - Similar to 2018, the focus groups showed that there was a high level of confusion amongst both parents and non-parents about whether kids should have a flu shot

“Actually, I’m not sure about kids having a flu shot or not, they do get the flu easily and spread it around so that’s why I think they should, but they probably shouldn’t have too much unnecessary medicine and injections while they are growing, so maybe its better they don’t.”

Bryan, 53, Landscaper, Riverstone (Sydney) NSW

When to Have the Influenza Vaccination

May the most popular

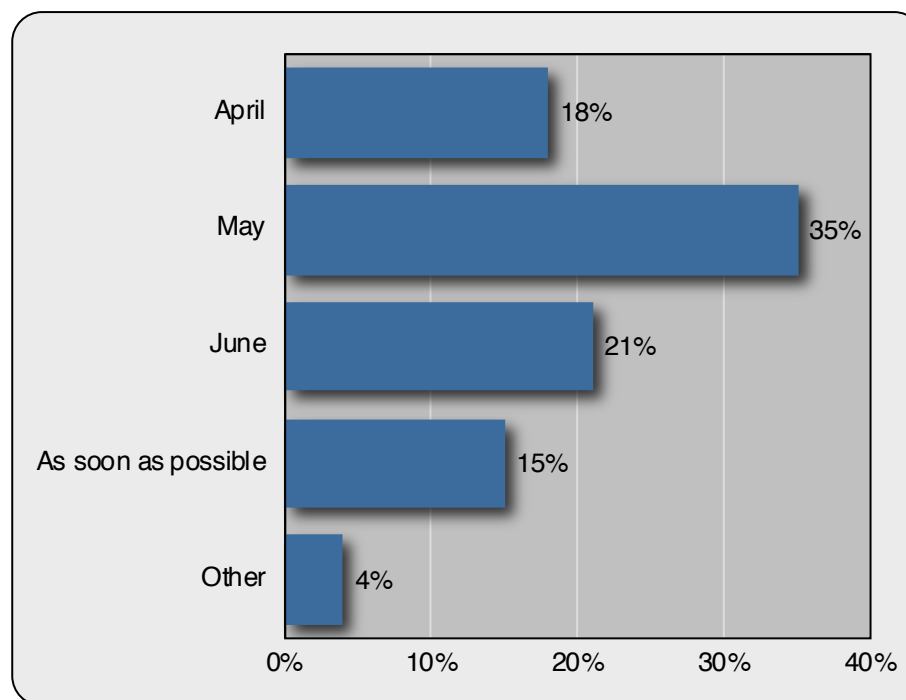
Q11. When do you plan to get vaccinated?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response was “May” by 35% of the adult population
 - “June” was the second most common response by 21%
 - The third most common response was “April” by 18%
 - “As soon as possible” was the fourth most common response by 15%
 - 4% of the adult population said “Other” and provided their own reason

Why May is the most popular

- The largest response, 35% overall, was that “May” is when they plan to get vaccinated:
 - The focus groups, identical to in 2018, 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 and widely available

“It always seems to be May for me, that’s when I have it because it’s my birthday and that kind of reminds me, plus it’s when it starts to get colder and I think that’s about when the newest vaccine is available.”
Joycelyn, 51, Human Resource Consultant, Menora (Perth) WA



Autumn when flu shot available

June second most popular

- The second most common response was “June” amongst 21% of the adult population, where:
 - From the focus groups, it is when most people believe that the latest vaccination is widely available
 - Younger people (those aged <35 years) were the largest group giving this response (55% of responses compared to 45% of responses from those aged 35+)
 - There was minimal difference across all other demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors

“I would say June because that’s when winter really starts and by then the latest flu shots have been made to protect against the most recent strain of the virus and its available to have.”

Liam, 30, Hairdresser, Toowong (Brisbane) QLD

April third most popular

- The third most common response was “April” amongst 18% of the population, where:
 - From the focus groups, those who plan to get vaccinated in April, do so because they want to be protected from the beginning of the flu season
 - Conversely, those who do not plan to get vaccinated in April said that it is often difficult to get a vaccination in April due to a shortage, with the other main argument being that it is too early, that a more updated vaccine is available in May or June and availability is often

“I like to have it in April, it’s when the flu starts to go around and I like to get in early and be covered as best I can.”

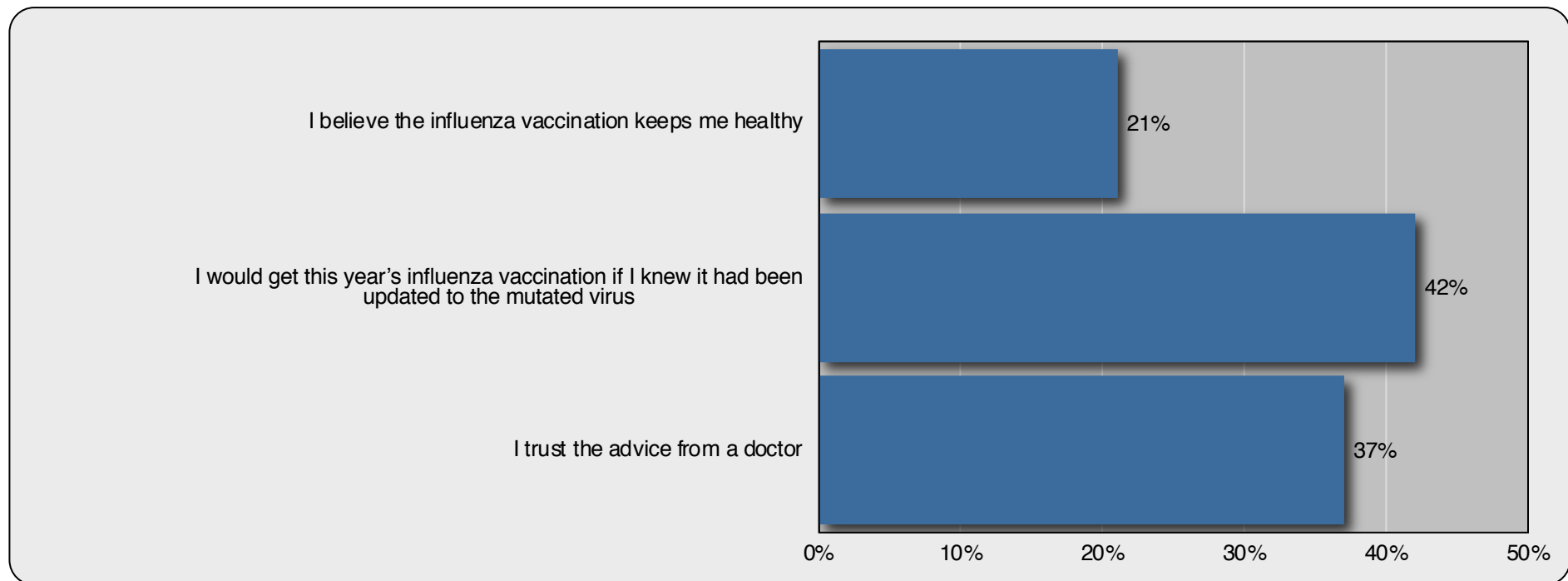
Eileen, 68, Retiree, Rokeby (Hobart) TAS

Thoughts on the Influenza Vaccination

Updated vaccination is top of mind

Q12. What are your thoughts on the influenza vaccination?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - The most common response was “I would get this year’s influenza vaccination if I knew it had been updated to better match the mutated flu virus” by 42% of the adult population
 - “trust the advice from a doctor” was the second most common response by 37%
 - The third most common response was “I believe the influenza vaccination keeps me healthy” by 21%



Desire for latest vaccine

Would get this year's influenza vaccination if it covered the latest mutation

- The most common response was “I would get this year's influenza vaccination if I knew it had been updated to better match the mutated flu virus” by 42% of the adult population, where:
 - Women mentioned this more than men (55% of responses from women compared to 45% from men)
 - Those in cities were also more likely to mention (54% of overall responses from those in cities compared to 46% from those in regional and rural areas)
 - Those from higher income households (>\$100,000 pa) mentioned this strongly, accounting for 31% of overall responses

“I would only get this year's vaccination if it was the most up to date and covering the latest strain of the virus, that's the protection I want and I would wait a little longer to get that one.”

Rick, 46, Telecommunications Engineer, Lawson (Canberra) ACT

Trust the advice of a doctor

- The second most common response was “I trust the advice of a doctor” by 37% of the adult population, where:
 - The focus groups also found this to be the second most common response amongst all participants
 - Overall, there was minimal difference across all demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who gave this response
 - Focus group participants were reiterated the same point, that doctors have the most up to date knowledge about the influenza vaccination, who it is most suitable for and are able to administer it

Believe the influenza vaccination keeps them healthy

- The third most common response was “I believe the influenza vaccination keeps me healthy” by 21% of the adult population, where:
 - Women, particularly those aged 45+ responded the highest
 - In the focus groups there was debate about this, with those against the statement arguing that the influenza vaccination is only suitable for some groups of people and not everyone (especially healthy and young people) so this was considered the least popular statement in every focus group essentially for this reason

Attitudes Towards Anti-Vaccination

Pose a risk to public health

Q13. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” pose a risk to public health in Australia?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - 83% of the adult population answered “Yes” believing that those opposed to vaccinations do pose a risk to public health in Australia
 - 17% of the adult population answered “No”

Women aged 45+ had the highest incidence of “Yes”

- Out of the total adult population, the segment which had the highest incidence of answering “Yes” were women aged 45+ with 90% of this group answering “Yes”.

“They (anti-vaxer’s) are extremely ignorant and dangerous, I have lived my life free from the worry of diseases like polio and measles because vaccination works and these people are putting others at risk with their stupid beliefs they get from online forums.”

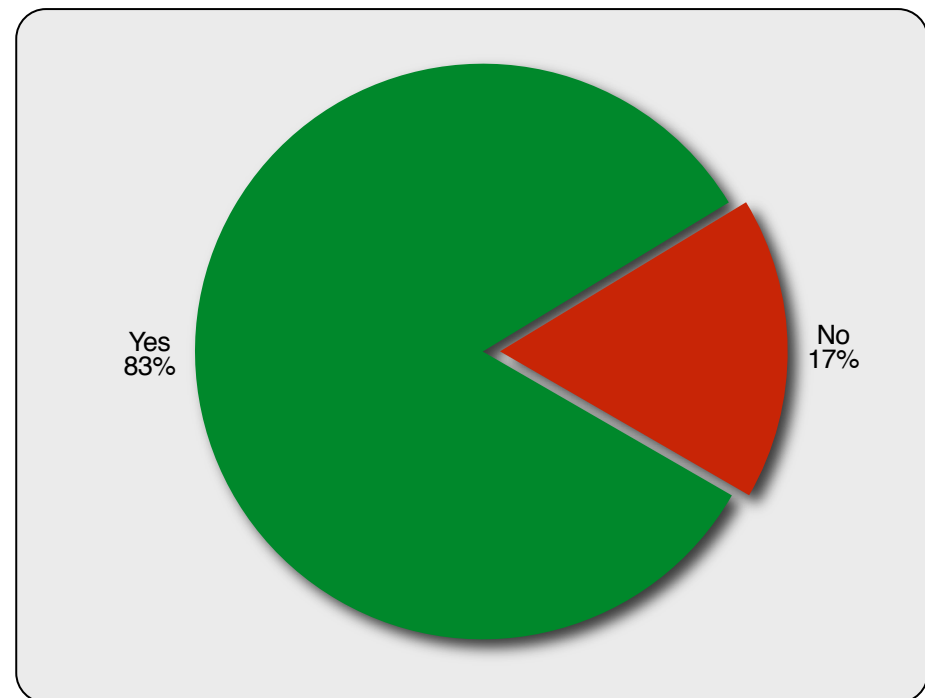
Margaret, 56, Retiree, Crowns Nest (Sydney) NSW

Young men and women highest incidence of “No”

- Out of the total adult population, the segment which had the highest incidence of answering “No” were young men and women aged 18-25 this group accounting for 9% of those who answered “No”.

“I don’t think they do if they are sensible and did seek medical help if they or someone under their care had an illness...plus it is not a law that everyone has to have vaccinations in Australia, so I don’t think every one should just blindly answer “Yes”.”

Jennifer, 22, Student, Northcote (Melbourne) VIC



Are a risk to health of people & families

Q14. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” pose a risk to the health of you and your family?

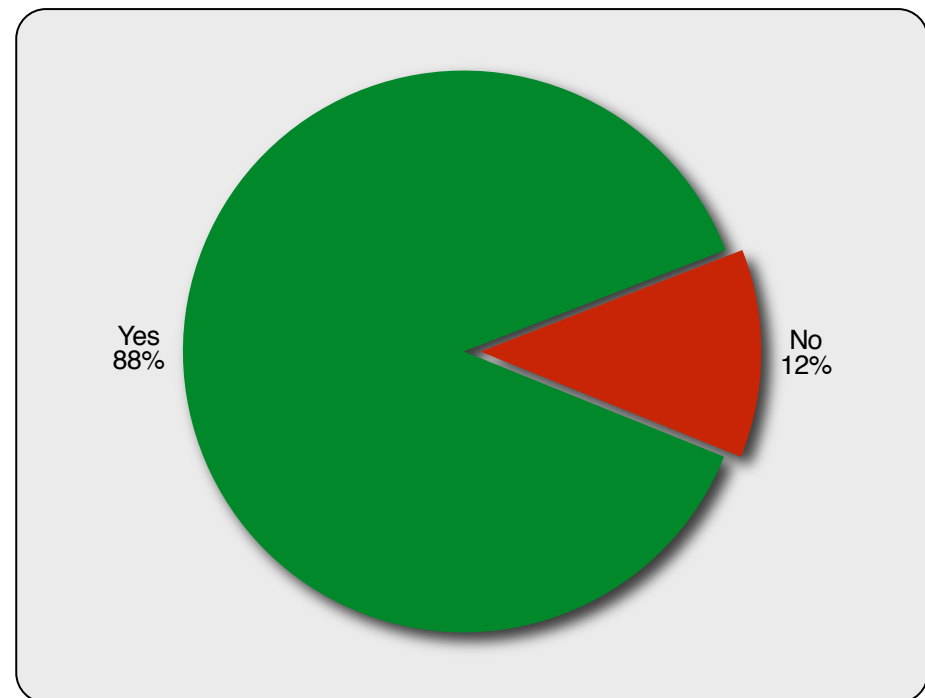
- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - 88% of the adult population answered “Yes” believing that those opposed to vaccinations do pose a risk to the health of themselves and their family
 - 12% of the adult population answered “No”

Women aged 45+ had the highest incidence of “Yes”

- Similar to the previous question, out of the total adult population, the segment which had the highest incidence of answering “Yes” were women aged 45+ with 92% of this group answering “Yes”.

“Of course they do, it’s already apparent, measles is popping up again, you hear about it in the news every few weeks lately and we are issuing notices to parents at the the school I work at about the problems associated wth the anti-vaccination campaigners because we have had a few children in the last 2-3 years who did not have all their vaccinations.”

Rowena, 51, Teacher, Mount Nelson (Hobart) TAS



Anti-vaxer's get too much media attention

Q15. Do you believe that “anti-vaxer’s” get too much media attention?

- The overall results to the question, as illustrated in the chart below, were:
 - 81% of the adult population answered “Yes” believing that those opposed to vaccinations get too much media attention
 - 19% of the adult population answered “No

Widely believed they get too much media attention

- There was minimal difference across all demographic and socio-economic factors amongst those who responded “Yes”.
- The only significant difference in responses was based on geographic location, where:
 - A larger number of those who answered “Yes” resided in the larger cities, accounting for 84% of all “Yes” responses

“Yes I think they do, I can recall interviews I’ve seen with them on current affairs TV shows and even the ABC had quite a pro anti-vaccination piece on one of their current affairs TV shows recently and this just shouldn’t be done.”

Celeste, 45, Stay-at-home parent, Cherrybrook (Sydney) NSW

