

### **Gender Differences in Attitudes Toward a COVID-19 vaccine in an Inner-City Patient Population**

Vaccines have been a topic of much controversy over the past few years and the COVID-19 pandemic has only added to this debate. We look at differences in attitudes towards COVID19 vaccines between male and female patients. A telephone survey was conducted with a random sample of 74 patients attending clinics at an inner-city hospital.

Mean age was  $61.3 \pm 11.2$  years. There were 46% (34) men and 54% (40) women with 78% (56) black, 11% (8) Hispanic, 6% (4) white, 1% (1) Asian, and 4% (3) mixed/other. There were no statistically significant differences between men and women regarding knowledge or perceived importance of vaccines. There was no statistically significant difference between men and women regarding receipt of the flu vaccine last fall; 77% (26/34) of men and 65% (26/40) of women received the flu vaccine ( $p=0.282$ ). There was no statistically significant difference between men and women regarding fear of COVID-19; 79% (27/34) of men and 78% (31/40) of women reported being afraid of COVID-19 ( $p=0.656$ ). There was a statistically significant difference between men and women regarding receipt of a potential COVID-19 vaccine; 44% (15/34) of men and 83% (33/40) of women said that they would refuse the vaccine ( $p=0.001$ ). Among patients who said that they would refuse the vaccine, there was no statistically significant difference between genders with respect to reason for refusal as both men and women were most concerned about safety of the vaccine compared to efficacy or cost.

In our population: 1) The safety and novelty of COVID-19 vaccines has caused a negative attitude shift towards receiving vaccines. 2) Despite a similar understanding and fear of COVID19, men are more accepting of COVID-19 vaccines than their female counterparts. 3) Identifying and understanding patients' fears of COVID-19 vaccines is imperative as future studies should address these fears so people become more accepting of the vaccine.