

## **Let COVID-19 Vaccine Protect Us and Our Communities**

Submitted to Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

Sept 14, 2021

By Centre for New Immigrant Wellbeing (CNIW) in Partnership with  
Confederation of Chinese Alumni Associations (CCAA)

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# 1. Summary

As highly effective vaccines become available in greater numbers, everyone in Canada can be part of the solution to end the pandemic. Our campaign project has covered a large scale of Canadian Chinese Community to call on individual actions to uptake vaccines to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

With so much information—and sometimes incorrect information—available today, learning the facts before making health decisions is very important. Our objective is to encourage as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible, and use scientific facts and information to clarify people's misunderstanding and myths of the vaccine. We have held online webinars and seminars, invited public health experts, frontline medical professionals and vaccine ambassadors from Chinese community appear on television, radio, print and social media, provided live-streaming Q and A on COVID-19 immunization, hosted and participated various anti-pandemic community events and launched a hotline to address common concerns, increase public awareness and incentive to get vaccinated.

Our campaigns have reached over 200,000 Canadian Chinese including various major ethnic groups, especially senior and youth groups across Canada. Though results in growing popularity of antivaccine movements affect local epidemiological situation. Vaccine hesitancy has become a significant problem not only for epidemiologists but also for practitioners. Fortunately, the hesitant group seems to be vulnerable to intervention, and our campaign project successfully demonstrated that some of these patients can be persuaded to uptake vaccine. We found the medical and scientific community exert decisive effects on attitudes toward vaccinations. High-quality information provided by them is of great importance. Skillful and competent provision of evidence-based information disproving the myth about vaccine-autism connection and proper education is essential in molding positive attitudes toward vaccinations.

Based on our interview and focus group preliminary study in this campaign project, we also initiate a new research plan to investigate the preferential differences in vaccination decision-making for oneself or one's child in Canadian Chinese community. To optimize the focus of future public information campaigns in promoting the uptake of vaccines among adults and children, we hope to quantify the contribution of several attributes to the vaccination decision.

## 2. Achievements

### 2.1. Describe what you achieved through this campaign. Present this information by aligning your achievements with objectives.

In order to further reduce mistrust in vaccines' safety and efficacy and improve awareness of the value of vaccines, we adopted a multi-pronged approach to promote the COVID-19 vaccination uptake across the life course in Canadian Chinese community.

We tackled negative misconceptions of vaccines through live-streaming Q and A, interviews, articles and presentations on virtual seminars and media platforms. We have made a close partnership with health services, universities and research scholars, and the press along with social media. Healthcare professionals right across the health system, far beyond doctors and nurses, also have an important role in improving uptake of vaccinations. We also launched a hotline to create a safe virtual space to address common concerns.

Additionally, availability and locations of appointments were identified as barriers to vaccination. Therefore, we constantly shared updated vaccination access information in our multiple channels, especially when tackling inequalities in uptake, for example relating to socioeconomic status, youth groups and newcomers, which results in more vaccination and less waste. Our campaign partnered with leading Canadian universities, almost 30 media outlets and 10 community organizations, and have reached over 200,000 Canadian Chinese, especially for senior and youth groups across Canada.

## **2.2. Describe *how* your campaign achieved objectives**

Our campaign adopted a multi-pronged method with a mix of traditional and new media to reach over 200,000 Canadians and newcomers by leveraging several influential organizations' ties to different groups.

On our website and WeChat, we are supported by a professional team, including professors, clinicians, health educators, and leading scientists to constantly publish evidence-based articles regarding COVID-19 vaccination from credible sources.

We partnered with 10 influential community organizations to hold weekly virtual seminars to provide culturally-appropriate, accurate information about COVID-19 to counteract misinformation about immunization and to reduce vaccine hesitancy through storytelling, interview, presentation by the health professionals, academic researchers, senior and youth ambassador.

We cooperated with almost 30 media outlets, including leading traditional channels such as OMNI, Canadian radio station, SingTao, FM105.9 and influential social medias to reach more Canadians, especially for newcomers and different age groups to deliver and encourage sharing of simple to understand COVID-19 vaccine messaging with reliable and accurate health information.

We launched a special hotline to create a safe virtual space to address common concerns.

We also initiate a research plan to investigate the preferential differences in vaccination decision-making to optimize the focus of future campaigns.

## **3. Challenges and Lessons Learned**

### **3.1. Describe any challenges you encountered in the implementation your campaign. Did these challenges alter your approach to implementing your campaign? If so, how?**

First, with the mass circulation of social media, misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines can spread further and faster than ever before, we try to use interactive ways to counteract vaccines 'fake news' on social media. For example, about a million users in Canada use WeChat. It's one of the main ways many Canadian Chinese get their news. It creates a intimate virtual space for acquaintances, offering a built-in system of social vouching. It is this perceived credibility, combined with a chat format that has made WeChat so rife for the spread of fake news. Therefore, beside cooperated with traditional media outlets, we partnered with 20+ influential WeChat channels and hundreds of WeChat groups to deliver credible information promoting COVID-19 vaccination, and encourage the community ambassadors to interact with target audiences.

Overall attitude to vaccinations was positive in Canadian Chinese Community, that leaves greater challenge to identify the target vaccine hesitant population. We therefore use the community organizations' strong social ties to extend the campaign's reach, we invited the people sharing their vaccine hesitancy in our hotline, live-streaming Q and A and webinars, and we initiate new study plan to evaluate the reason of vaccine hesitancy for better targeted future campaigns.

### **3.2. If you were giving advice to someone who is planning on implementing a similar campaign, what advice would you give them?**

Vaccine hesitancy is complex and dynamic; more targeted and mass campaigns need to reflect and address these complexities in both design and evaluation.

First, implementers must adequately identify the target population and understand the true nature of their particular vaccine and/or vaccination concerns; this will help ensure a better-informed messaging and promotion.

Secondly, campaigns should be multi-component and seek to address primary determinants of uptake across the different domains of influence; our robust media strategy and in-person community outreach to combat misinformation and vaccine hesitance worked well. Target audiences should be clearly identified and specific issues well researched and understood. We have customized micro-campaign to deliver culturally-sensitive messaging on different targeted groups. Specifically, implementers must be able to appreciate the influence of individual components which will benefit the immediate actions.

Since scientific-sounding misinformation is more strongly associated with declines in vaccination intent. Our campaigns made a great efforts to improve vaccine literacy and reduce vaccine hesitancy through a series of online seminars, live-streaming engaging interview, evidence-based social media messaging and a specialized hotline supported by leading experts and frontline health professions. We need to collaborate with multiple stakeholders such as traditional and social media outlets, community organizations and education institutions.

### **3.3. Describe what you would do differently if you were to implement this campaign (or a similar campaign) again.**

Immigrants have a disproportionately high representation in employment sectors with greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 (Statistics Canada, 2020), but their willingness to receive the COVID-19 vaccine has a lower rate compared to the Canadian-born population. Therefore, if we were to implement this campaign again, we will promote confidence in vaccination, public health compliance and equitable health outcomes by reaching low-income residents, immigrants, non-permanent residents and residents living in high infection areas. We could integrate culturally relevant methods of communication (art, storytelling, music and dance) to combat language barriers, collaborating with faith-based organizations, local congregation sites and businesses which have higher new-comers employment. We could also make handouts distributed to grocery and retail stores and more hotline service together with new immigrant centers.



Besides that, youth aged 12 to 17 have the lowest overall vaccination rate of any eligible age cohort in the Ontario. We should ramp up youth vaccination efforts, by recruiting more youth ambassadors to deliver the pro-vaccination messages on multiple media platforms, including Discord, Twitch, TikTok and Instagram through video, audio art, posters and animations. These digitally savvy youth ambassadors are expected to act as agents of change and foster dialogue within their communities.

## **4. Metrics**

**4.1 Using appropriate metrics, describe how you effectively reached your campaign audience. Where applicable, provide quantitative evaluation metrics. Depending on your campaign and the medium you used, these metrics can include, but are not limited to video views, page visits, interactions, click rates, website traffic, impressions, mentions, shares etc.**

Our campaign has reached at least 200,000 Canadians and newcomers by leveraging several influential organizations' ties to different groups across Canada. We are supported by a professional team, including 78 professors, clinicians, health educators, and leading scientists to constantly publish evidence-based articles regarding COVID-19 vaccination from credible sources.

Channel and activities	Performance Measures	Description
CNIW Website	Published over 50 articles to provide accurate information about COVID-19 to counteract misinformation about COVID-19 immunization and to reduce immunization hesitancy;	With a 230.44% increase since the campaign

	Daily 100-400 visit	
<p>CNIW WeChat</p> 	Average 1000 visit per article	Over 2000 subscribers, and keep increasing with two digits each week.
Traditional mainstream Media(OMNI, SingTao, Canadian Radio, FM105.9, WOW TV)	Cover most of GTA, including York region, Peel region, Halton region, etc, along with their Facebook, Youtube, WeChat and website to extend the coverage across Canada and abroad	More than 20 times weekly video and audio interview, live-streaming Q and A sessions during the campaign
Four community virtual events and social media partnership	Partner with 10 influential community organizations to hold series virtual seminars to reach more Canadians, especially for newcomers and different age groups. Their total subscribers and readership are over 200,000.	We launched a virtual media press to ally with almost 30 media outlets, including around 20 influential social medias. And our articles, interviews and events have been constantly distributed through their media channels and hundreds of WeChat groups.
Youth ambassadors and volunteers	50 high school students	Use personal experiences to advocate COVID-19 vaccine uptake and assist our community events
Hotline	We set up a specialized hotline 289-800-8818 during our campaign period	<p>We created a safe virtual space to address common or sensitive concerns.</p> <p>In total we have 78 university professors, health professionals,</p>

		researchers and educators as our Expert Council
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## 5.0. Additional Information

Vaccine hesitancy is a complex issue. The public's willingness to accept a vaccine is not static; it is highly responsive to current information and sentiment around a COVID-19 vaccine. There has been widely circulating false information about the pandemic on social media platforms, such information can build on pre-existing fears, seeding doubt and cynicism over new vaccines, and threatens to limit public uptake of COVID-19 vaccination. Therefore, the future campaign should continuously pay attention to the impact of how exposure to misinformation and sociodemographic characteristics affect intent to receive the vaccine.

Therefore, more studies are needed to understand how misinformation differentially impacts sociodemographic groups and whether groups at high risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19 are more vulnerable to misinformation. We should developed a pre–post–exposure study design and questionnaire to investigate how exposure to misinformation differentially impacts individuals according to their sociodemographic characteristics, daily time spent on social media platforms, and sources of trusted information on COVID-19. The results can motivate the future design of group-targeted campaigns to reduce the potential impact of online vaccine misinformation, and to increase effectiveness of public health communication strategies.