**Racial and Ethnic, Gender Disparities Seen in LGBT COVID-19 Vaccination Rates**

Compared with heterosexual adults, a greater proportion of gay and lesbian adults reported having received at least 1 dose of COVID-19 vaccine, according to a report on results from a nationally representative telephone survey. By race and ethnicity, however, vaccination rates were lowest among Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals, particularly women.

Health conditions that increase the risk of developing severe COVID-19 disproportionately affect LGBT adults in the US. The report’s authors noted concern because many LGBT individuals lack health coverage, report experiencing discrimination by health care providers, or other barriers to care. To learn more about COVID-19 vaccination rates among LGBT individuals, the authors analyzed data from the National Immunization Survey—Adult COVID Module, a telephone survey of about 153,000 adults conducted from August 29 through October 30, 2021.

About 85% of gay and lesbian adults reported having received at least 1 dose of COVID-19 vaccine compared with approximately 76% of both heterosexual and bisexual adults. Vaccination rates did not differ between people who are transgender or nonbinary and those who are not. More gay, lesbian, and bisexual adults reported concern about COVID-19 and confidence in vaccine safety compared with heterosexual adults.

Vaccination rates were highest among White gay men at 94.1%, White lesbian women at 88.5%, and Hispanic gay men at 82.9%. Hispanic gay and lesbian women’s vaccination rates were somewhat lower at 72.6%. About 77% of Black gay men and 79.8% of Black bisexual men had received at least 1 COVID-19 vaccine dose compared with 57.9% of Black gay or lesbian women and 62.1% of Black bisexual women.

The authors suggest that educating people about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines in Black and Hispanic communities and increasing opportunities for people to get vaccinated may help increase coverage among unvaccinated LGBT individuals.

**Registry Tracks Zika-Related Birth Defects in US**

About 5% of pregnant women with confirmed or suspected Zika virus infection gave birth to a child with an infection-related brain or eye defect, according to data from the US Zika Pregnancy and Infant Registry. The registry was created to monitor effects of the 2015-2017 Zika virus outbreak in the US, its territories, and 3 Pacific nations classified as “freely associated states.” Among 6799 live births in the registry to mothers with laboratory evidence of confirmed or suspected Zika virus infection between December 2015 and March 2018, 315 infants had at least 1 Zika-related birth defect. In a subgroup of women with a positive nucleic acid amplification test during pregnancy, 138 of 2257 infants had a Zika-related birth defect.

The birth defects were more common when mothers’ infections occurred earlier during pregnancy. Eight percent of infants born to women with first trimester infections had a birth defect compared with 6% of infants born to women with second trimester infections and 3.8% of those with third trimester infections. Among 325 pregnancy losses reported in the registry, 13 fetuses had Zika-related birth defects, all of which involved the brain.

Birth defects reported most frequently were microcephaly; corpus callosum abnormalities; intracranial calcification; abnormal cortical gyral patterns; ventriculomegaly; cerebral or cortical atrophy; atrophy, scarring, or pigment changes in the choroid or retina of the eye; or optic nerve abnormalities. Investigators continue to monitor children in the registry for signs of neurological problems or developmental delays. Surveillance for Zika-associated birth defects may help identify more infants affected by prenatal infections and help detect any reemergence of Zika virus in the US, the authors suggest. — Bridget M. Kuehn, MSJ

**Note:** Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.