COVID-19 Literature Review Group
Prepared by The Ohio State University

COVID-19 Vaccine Approval and Opinions about Receiving COVID-19 Vaccines
COVID-19 Literature Review  
Prepared by Kenya Moyers, The Ohio State University  
July 21, 2021  

**Topic:** COVID-19 Vaccines Approval

**Title:** Why Aren’t the Vaccines Approved?  
**Source:** The New York Times  
**Publication Date:** July 21, 2021  
**Link:** [https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/21/briefing/covid-vaccines-fda-approval.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/21/briefing/covid-vaccines-fda-approval.html)  
**Study Period:** N/A  
**Study Location:** N/A  
**Sample Size:** N/A

**Summary:** With nearly the entire scientific community, in addition to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), urging Americans to get vaccinated, the government still has not formally approved any vaccine. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has given only “emergency use authorization” to the vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson. This is a temporary form of approval that allows people to receive vaccinations while the agency continues to study their safety and effectiveness. A lack of FDA approval prevents schools, colleges, businesses, and other organizations from requiring vaccinations. Additionally, this leads to uncertainty and skepticism among those Americans who have not been vaccinated yet. The FDA believes that there is not enough safety data as of yet to approve the vaccines. However, the FDA’s official position on the matter does not match its leaders’ view that Americans should be getting vaccinated as soon as possible. After rigorous review, the Pfizer vaccine meets the FDA’s high standards for safety and effectiveness. There have been questions about the duration of the review and approval process of the vaccines. Speeding up the formal approval process risks undermining the public’s confidence in the FDA and the medicine that it approves. Some argue that FDA officials are acting as if most Americans are experts in the nuances of their approval process and would be shocked if the agency expedite it. In reality, most Americans know little to nothing about the process, but are confused by the mixed messages the FDA are sending. The FDA’s lack of formal approval has few benefits and large costs. The agency has neither protected its reputation nor maximized the number of Americans who have been protected from COVID-19. Officials believe that if we receive FDA approval, we could get another 20 million Americans vaccinated. Full approval is most likely going to be the catalyst for new mandates to be set in place. A full approval of the Pfizer vaccine could come in September, with the approval of the Moderna vaccine shortly after.

**Key Findings Relevant to Ohio’s Response:** Upon full approval of the COVID-19 vaccines, there is potential for a surge in the number of people who receive the vaccination. As a result, this would mitigate the issues of vaccine hesitancy and increase in cases that we are observing.
COVID-19 Literature Review
Prepared by Kenya Moyers, The Ohio State University
July 23, 2021

Topic: Opinions about Receiving COVID-19 Vaccines

Title: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor: In Their Own Words, Six Months Later
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation
Publication Date: July 13, 2021
Study Location: United States
Sample Size: N/A
Summary: The Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor is an ongoing research project that tracks the public’s attitudes and experiences with COVID-19 vaccines. The program utilizes a combination of surveys and qualitative research to track the dynamic nature of public opinion as vaccine development and distribution unfold, including vaccine confidence and hesitancy. Using a nationally representative sample of adults, researchers conducted interviews with open-ended questions to aid in the understanding of public concerns about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Participants were interviewed in early January 2021 and contacted 6-months later for follow-up. During the follow-up interview, participants were asked whether they decided to get vaccinated, their reasoning for their decision, and how they feel about their choice. Findings show that majority (92%) of those who planned to get vaccinated “as soon as possible” in early 2021, had received at least 1-dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, as well as 54% of the individuals who stated that they wanted to “wait and see” before getting vaccinated. Among the 76% of people who said that they would “only get vaccinated if required” or “definitely not” a COVID-19 vaccine remained unvaccinated. Twenty-one percent of adults are vaccinated after saying in January that they planned on “waiting”, “only if required”, or “would definitely not”. These participants noted that their friends, family, and physicians persuaded them to get vaccinated. Examples of persuasive factors included seeing friends and family get vaccinated with no serious side effects, talking to family members about being able to safely visit, and conversations with physicians about their own risks. The easing of restrictions for those who have been vaccinated was also a factor in decided to get vaccinated.

For those who decided to get vaccinated, 24% reported that they feel safe and 22% reported that they feel relieved. Additional positive feelings about their decision included freedom, confidence, and more certainty that if they did get COVID-19 it would be less severe. 1 in 10 participants stated that they felt the same or neutral. This response was more common among those who initially said that they would “wait and see” or those who said they would “only get vaccinated if required” or “would not get vaccinated”. As stated before, conversations with family and friends play a major role in persuading people to get vaccinated. Two-thirds of vaccinated adults have tried to persuade their family and friends. Among those who said that they would “wait and see”, 17% were persuaded by family members and 5% were persuaded by friends to get vaccinated. Others cite protecting their family and friends, being able to see friends and family, and family pressure or encouragement as the main reasons for getting vaccinated. Among those who planned on getting vaccinated “as soon as possible” or wanting to “wait and see”, about a fourth of them remained unvaccinated 6-months later at follow-up. Some mentioned that they have an appointment or still plan on getting the shot when able. Sixty-six percent now say that they either will “only get vaccinated if required” or “definitely not” get the vaccine. When asked why their decision changed, participants stated that it was due to concerns about the side effects of the vaccine. In fact, being concerned about the side effects is the top reason why unvaccinated people have not received a COVID-19 vaccine. Most people in the “wait and see” group say that they just want more time to see how the vaccine affects others who have already gotten it. Others state that the vaccine is too new, too unknown, or not tested enough. Participants who are not vaccinated said that they do not see the benefit because
they do not believe that they are at risk of getting sick from the virus or they have already had COVID-19. Few people explicitly mentioned wanting full FDA approval before getting the vaccine.

Key Findings Relevant to Ohio’s Response: Persuasion from family, friends, and physicians play a major role in one’s decision to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Additionally, FDA approval remains important as well when deciding whether or not to get vaccinated.