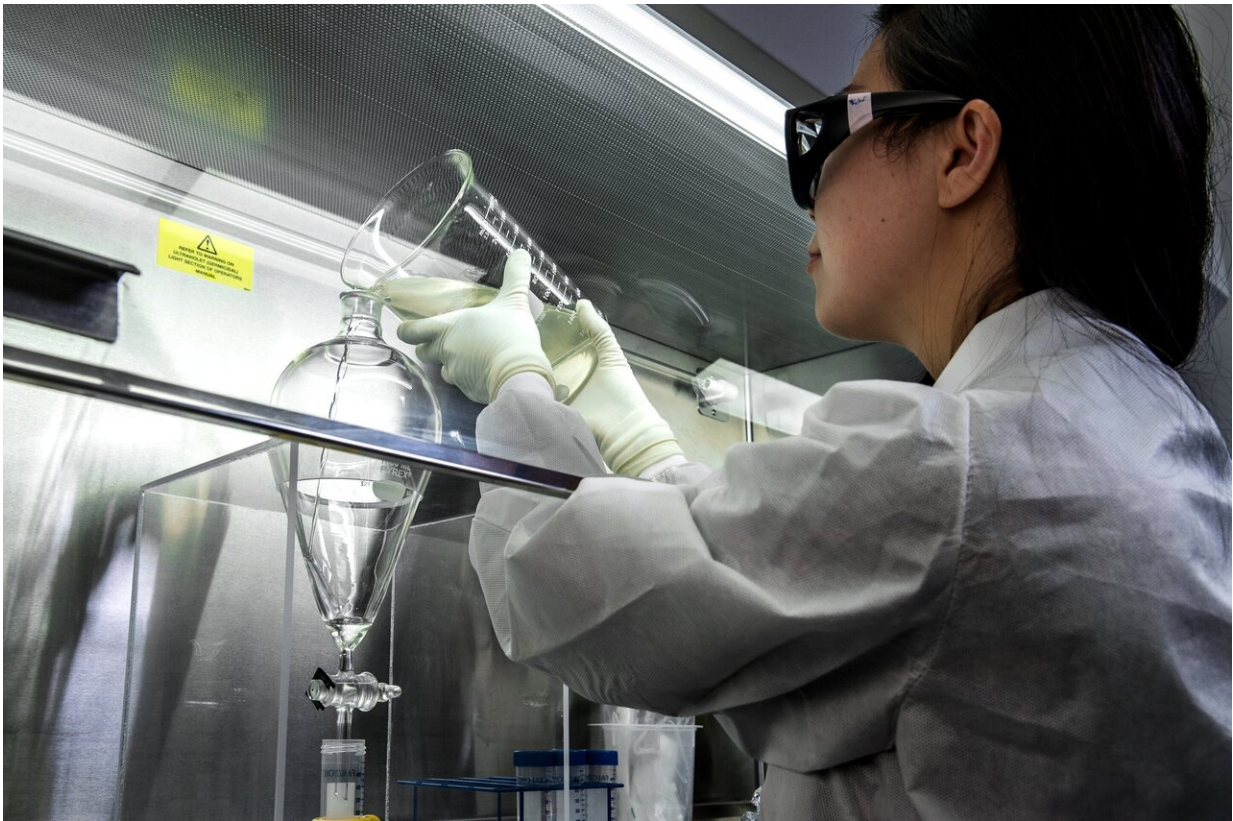


Only 41% of people would sign up for COVID-19 trials, says new report

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Research conducted by the University of Birmingham shows in order to have an effective COVID-19 vaccination rollout it has to be widely accepted by the entire population.

The study, conducted in collaboration with the NIHR Clinical Research Network West Midlands and The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust was published in the journal *Trials* involved an anonymous cross-sectional online survey across the UK involving 4884 participants of which 9.44% were Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME). Overall, 2020 (41.4%) respondents were interested in participating in vaccine trials, while 27.6% of the respondents were not interested and 31.1% were unsure. The most interested groups were male, graduates the 40-49 and 50-59 age groups and those with no health issues. The least interested groups were BAME those from villages and small towns and those aged 70 and above.

Currently, the UK registry has a very low trial participant uptake on the elderly and BAME participants which are two high-risk priority groups. The study concludes there is a need to design interventional and public health strategies to engage and encourage trial participation from these specific demographic groups as the [research data](#) provides unique insights into participation interest geographically and can be used to target ongoing and future campaigns in rural and core inner city populations.

Dr. Anandadeep Mandal, lecturer in finance from the Birmingham Business School and one the lead authors who carried out the [research design](#) involving enhanced [text mining](#) and non-linear estimations said: "This study has key importance with COVID-19 mutant (VOC) B117 acquiring mutant E484 and the need for continual trials. The study examines the various factors affecting participation in trials, including geographical locations in England. The results indicate the lack of interest in [trial participation](#) among the BAME community even though they score high on importance of vaccine trials. Further, respondents from small town and villages fail to address the need for vaccine trials. Therefore, a joint effort is required engage various ethnic communities and people from different geographical locations to participate in

[vaccine trials](#) to help the society in need."

Even though 50% of the UK population has the first dose of the vaccination current COVID-19 vaccination trials are not adequately representing a diverse participant population in terms of age, ethnicity and backgrounds which is becoming a challenge in clinical trial management. The study highlights how it is crucial to recruit patients which are representative of the target population which can help in drug development. The aim of this study was to provide possible interventions to increase the uptake for COVID-19 vaccine trial participations with the overall goal to acquire a safe and effective vaccine. This can provide useful in future trials that will continue on for 2021, such as human challenge trials, phase 3 trials and non-inferiority COVID-19 [vaccine](#) studies.

The study could not ascertain the reasons to why people did not want to partake in vaccination [trials](#) but they were to deduce their general perception towards COVID-19 and vaccines, as well as extracting demographic and geographical data. Being able to understand the key reasons would be beneficial in targeting educational campaigns to tackle specific barriers to trial recruitment.

More information: Sonika Sethi et al, The UPTAKE study: implications for the future of COVID-19 vaccination trial recruitment in UK and beyond, *Trials* (2021). [DOI: 10.1186/s13063-021-05250-4](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-021-05250-4)

Provided by University of Birmingham

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