



Factors influencing COVID-19 vaccination acceptability in three Canadian federal prisons: A qualitative analysis of incarcerated people's perspectives

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Background

There have been concerning COVID-19 outbreaks in correctional settings worldwide¹, including Canada². Consequently, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization prioritized incarcerated people for early COVID-19 vaccination³. Vaccine uptake has been historically low in correctional settings⁴, and barriers and facilitators to COVID-19 vaccination have not yet been fully investigated.

Objective

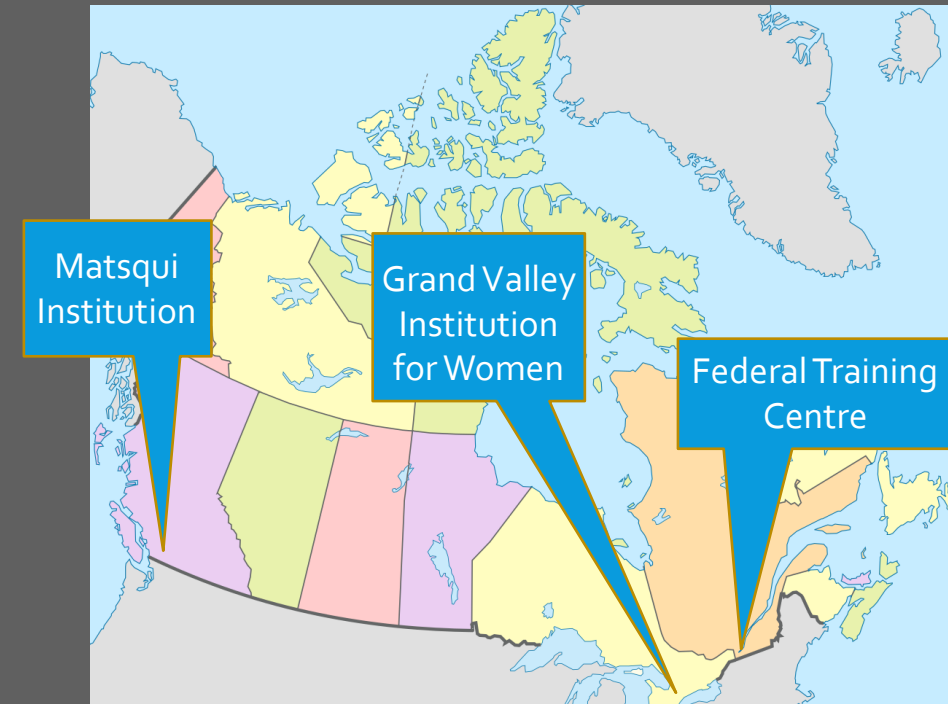
To explore determinants of COVID-19 vaccine acceptability among people incarcerated in the Canadian federal correctional system.

Methods



- Qualitative descriptive study
- Quota sampling based on age, ethnicity, sex, and security level
- March 22-29, 2021: Remote in-depth semi-structured interviews about healthcare in prison, knowledge and experiences with COVID-19 and vaccines, perceived risks & benefits of COVID-19 vaccines
- Thematic analysis and classification of barriers and facilitators within the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF), which serves to explain how individuals' or communities' decisions are shaped by past and present experiences, resources, and restrictions⁵

Three sites:



Baseline characteristics of participants (n=15)

Sociodemographic characteristics	
Sex	
Male	10 (67%)
Female	5 (33%)
Age range	
< 35 years old	4 (27%)
35-44 years old	3 (20%)
45-54 years old	6 (40%)
55-64 years old	2 (13%)
Ethnicity	
White	4 (27%)
Indigenous	6 (40%)
Other visible minority	5 (33%)

Self-reported prior COVID-19 diagnosis	1 (7%)
Self-reported uptake of influenza vaccine in prison (ever)	8 (53%)
Expressed desire to receive the COVID-19 vaccine	11 (73%)

Results

TDF domains

Barriers

Facilitators

Social influences	Receiving strict recommendations	Receiving recommendations from trusted individuals
	Believing in conspiracies to harm	
Beliefs about consequences	Believing that infection prevention and control measures will not be fully lifted despite vaccination	Seeking both individual and collective protection against severe COVID-19
	Being concerned with the risk of side effects or getting sick because of the vaccine	Believing that vaccination will allow a collective "return to normal"
		Believing that there will be individual privileges for those who are vaccinated
Knowledge	Lacking information on the vaccine	Reassurance about vaccine outcomes
Environmental context and resources	---	Perceiving correctional employees as the sources of COVID-19 outbreaks
		Perceiving challenges related to prevention measures in prison
Emotions	---	Having experienced COVID-19-related stress

Conclusion

A lack of confidence and information were key barriers identified. Education about COVID-19 vaccines, delivered by trusted health care providers, may improve COVID-19 vaccine uptake in correctional settings going forward.

References

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