

# INFLUENZA VACCINE: DO THE BELIEFS OF VACCINE UPTAKE CHANGE AMONG HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC ERA?

Summary: Influenza vaccine is being offered to the health care workers (HCW) in Malaysia yearly. In this study, we would like to explore the encouraging factors and barriers of influenza vaccine uptake among HCW in Malaysia in post COVID-19 era. The uptake of influenza vaccine among HCW remained low (62.7%) although being offered as free. The effectiveness of vaccine for self and family protection towards influenza remain the main factors of influenza vaccine uptake. The main barrier is the worried of the side effects of vaccine. The beliefs regarding influenza vaccination among HCW are similar as compared to beliefs pre-COVID-19 era.



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## INTRODUCTION

- In Malaysia, selective high-risk groups among HCW would be offered free influenza vaccination yearly.
- HCW are strongly recommended for taking yearly influenza vaccine in view of the risk of contracting and transmitting the influenza to the patients and family members.
- The prevalence of influenza vaccine uptake varies among HCW across the world ranged within 9 – 92% (1).
- The world was hit by COVID-19 pandemic since end of 2019, we were being fed by many information regarding vaccination during pandemic. Does this pandemic have an effect on the beliefs of influenza vaccine among HCW?

## OBJECTIVE

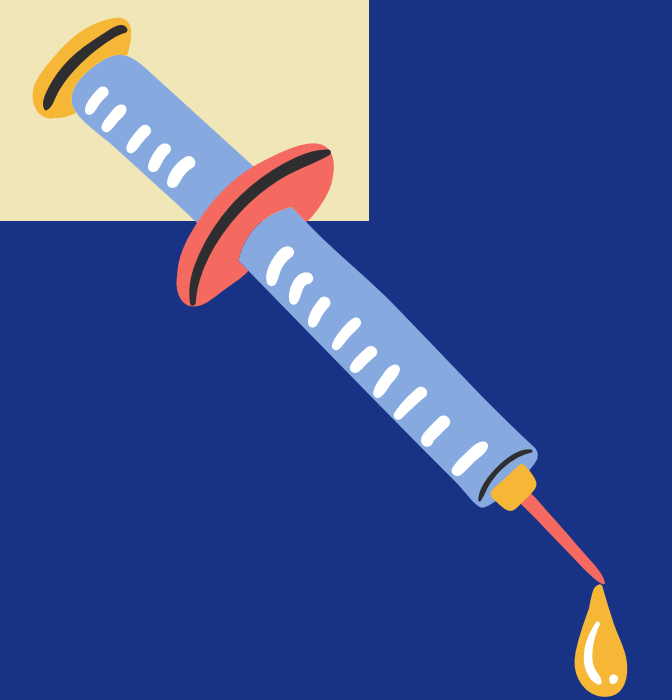
To explore the encouraging factors and barriers of influenza vaccine uptake among HCW in Malaysia in post COVID-19 pandemic era.

## METHODOLOGY

- A cross sectional study was conducted among the 295 HCW working in Seberang Perai Utara district, Penang in January 2023.
- Sample size was calculated using single proportion formula.
- Respondents from all categories working in government health clinics, inspectorate unit and government dental clinics were selected randomly to answer the adopted self-administered questionnaires regardless their risk in getting influenza infection (3,4).

## RESULTS

- The prevalence of influenza vaccine uptake among HCW was 62.7%.
- When compared the social demographic characteristics and knowledge of the HCW who was vaccinated and non-vaccinated for influenza vaccine in year 2022, there were significant difference in term of educational level, working departments, job categories and knowledge on influenza.



## ANALYSIS

- The top encouraging factor to take influenza vaccine was belief in the effectiveness of vaccine in preventing influenza (81.6%).
- The main barrier of influenza vaccine uptake was worried about the side effect of vaccine (22.7%).
- Majority of the HCW who took influenza vaccine had diploma educational level and above (72.4%), worked in the maternal and child health department (28.6%) and worked as nurses (33.0%).
- The mean (SD) knowledge scores were low for both vaccinated and non-vaccinated groups, 4.49 (1.29) and 3.96 (1.56) respectively, maximum scores were 8.

Figure 1: Encouraging Factors for Influenza Vaccine Uptake among Vaccinated HCW (N = 185)

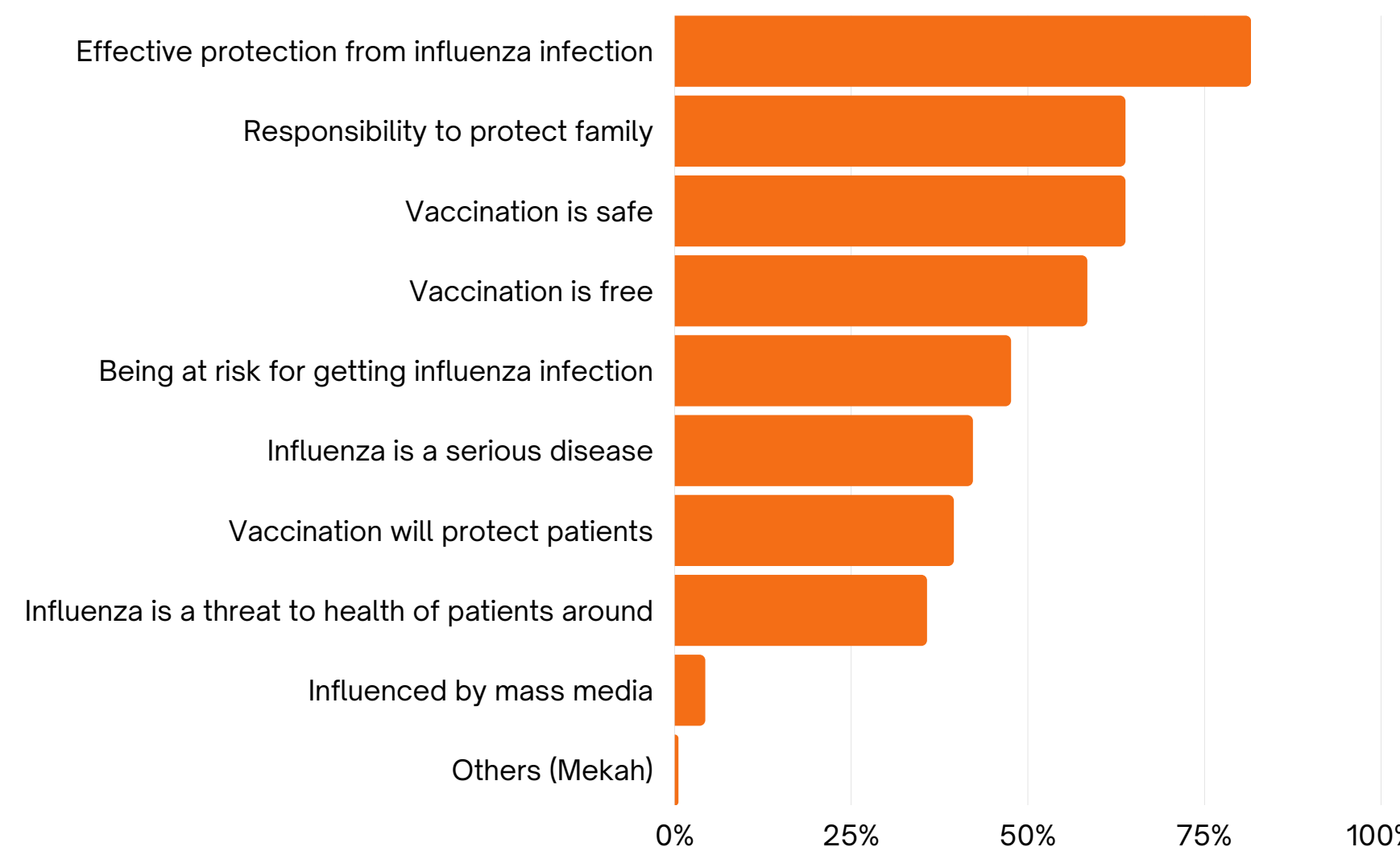
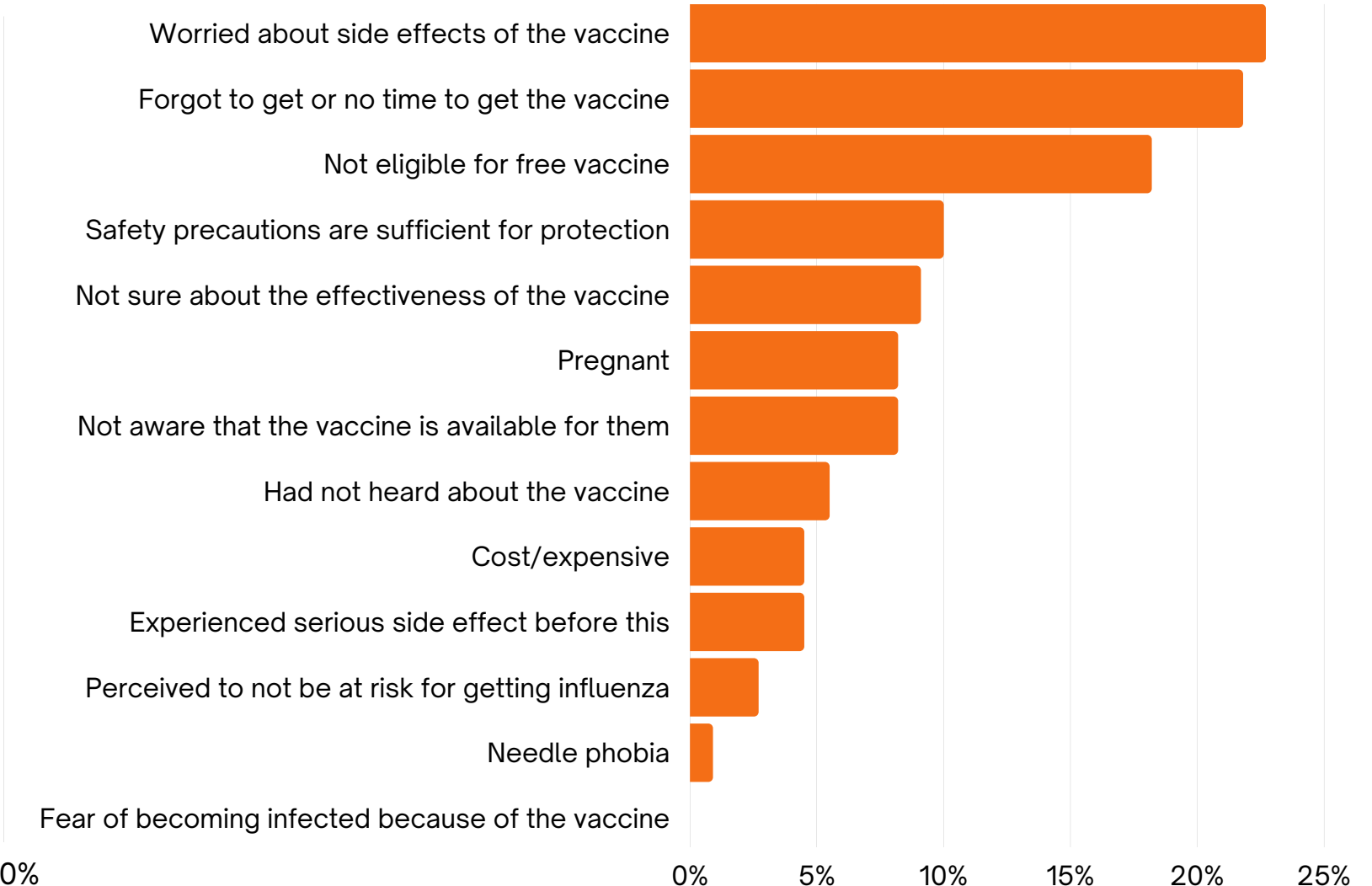


Figure 2: Barriers of Influenza Vaccine Uptake among Unvaccinated HCW (N = 110)



## CONCLUSION

- The beliefs of influenza vaccine uptake among HCW in post-COVID-19 era are similar to the beliefs in pre-COVID-19 era (1,2).
- To encourage influenza vaccine uptake among HCW
  - The awareness on the effectiveness of vaccine in preventing influenza and family protection from influenza should be increased
  - To alleviate the concern regarding the side effects of vaccine among HCW

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