

‘Early warning flags’: COVID vaccination data show that hardest hit communities are less likely to get shots

As vaccine distribution continues, [ensuring racial equity](#) will be important for mitigating the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on people of color, preventing widening health disparities, and achieving broad population immunity.

...

To date, vaccination patterns by race and ethnicity appear to be at odds with who the virus has affected the most. Based on vaccinations with known race/ethnicity, the share of vaccinations among Black people is smaller than their share of cases in all 16 reporting states and smaller than their share of deaths in 15 states. For example, in Mississippi, Black people account for 15% of vaccinations, compared to 38% of cases and 42% of deaths, and, in Delaware, 8% of vaccinations have been received by Black people, while they make up nearly a quarter of cases (24%) and deaths (23%). Similarly, Hispanic people account for a smaller share of vaccinations compared to their share of cases and deaths in most states reporting data. For example, in Nebraska, 4% of vaccinations are among Hispanic people, while they make up 23% of cases and 13% of deaths.

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Together the data raise some early warning flags about potential racial disparities in access to and uptake of the vaccine, but it is difficult to draw strong conclusions given that the vaccines are not yet broadly available and due to data limitations.

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