

Poll: More than a third in Massachusetts unlikely to get COVID-19 vaccine

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More than a third of Massachusetts adults would be unlikely to get the vaccine for COVID-19, according to new poll results, with adults who feel that way citing a lack of trust in the approval process and concerns about side effects.

The Western New England University Polling Institute surveyed 415 adults and also found that 90 percent said they support their city or town requiring people to wear masks in public places, 64 percent said they are very or somewhat worried about contracting COVID-19, and 66 percent said they know someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, with 29 percent saying they know someone who has died from COVID-19.

“Despite the suffering and deprivation that people may have encountered either firsthand or through the experiences of others during the pandemic, a sizable percentage of the public right now is not convinced about the value of getting a vaccine,” said institute director Tim Vercellotti. “Of course, these numbers may fluctuate as the public receives more information and as distribution of vaccines gets underway.”

The poll, which found nearly 60 percent of adults said they were likely to get the vaccine, was conducted by phone over a one-month period ending Nov. 24. It has a margin of error of plus or minus five percentage points. Analysts believe a limited quantity of vaccine could be released this month, pending government approval, and public officials are deliberating over who will be the first to get vaccinated, with health care workers and older Americans with underlying

health conditions among the groups likely to get access first. Officials say COVID-19 is the cause of deaths so far this year of more than 10,000 residents of Massachusetts.