

CLOSING THE VACCINE EQUITY GAP IN TEXAS



THE PROBLEM: Data Collection Issues Complicated Efforts to Ensure Vaccine Equity

- Texas is one of only two states with an opt-in immunization registry (ImmTrac2), meaning patients have to sign up to participate. This requires additional funding and time to get people enrolled.
- COVID-19 vaccination data in ImmTrac2 failed to capture patients' racial and ethnic data and lacked standardized reporting guidelines for patient information, resulting in large sets of incomplete or missing data.
- The data that was collected revealed significant disparities in vaccine access in Texas. On average, white residents in Texas were 1.65 times more likely than Black residents and 1.40 times more likely than Hispanic residents to have received a single dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

[Failures in COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Data Collection Complicated Efforts to Ensure Vaccine Equity in Texas](#) (2022), authored by R.A.S. Laroche, R.J. Llinas, A.M. Navara, M.T. Tan, R. Lakshmanan and K.R.W. Matthews, examines the vaccine equity challenges facing Texas during the early months of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The brief was presented during the [2022 Texas Vaccine Policy Symposium](#) at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy on October 14, 2022.

THE SOLUTION: Improve ImmTrac2

Having accurate data on racial and ethnic differences in vaccination rates is important for identifying inequities in vaccine access. The failure to pass adequate policies that facilitate regular and detailed tracking of immunization data risks jeopardizing public health outcomes during the next pandemic or the current resurgence of COVID-19 variants.

In order to improve vaccine data collection in Texas, policymakers should:

- 01 | Change the current immunization registry to an opt-out system.** An opt-out system would save money and improve access for people who are unaware of the registry, lack the resources to request admittance or have no preference — but still allow those who do not wish to participate to easily and permanently exempt themselves.
- 02 | Standardize the data collected.** To address the challenges in equitable vaccine distribution during future public health crises, there is a need for routine collection of immunization data.

For more information on vaccines, visit the Vaccines Cause Adults page at: bakerinstitute.org/vaccines-cause-adults.

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