

# The Challenges of Aging During COVID-19: Long Term Care, Vaccination, and Isolation

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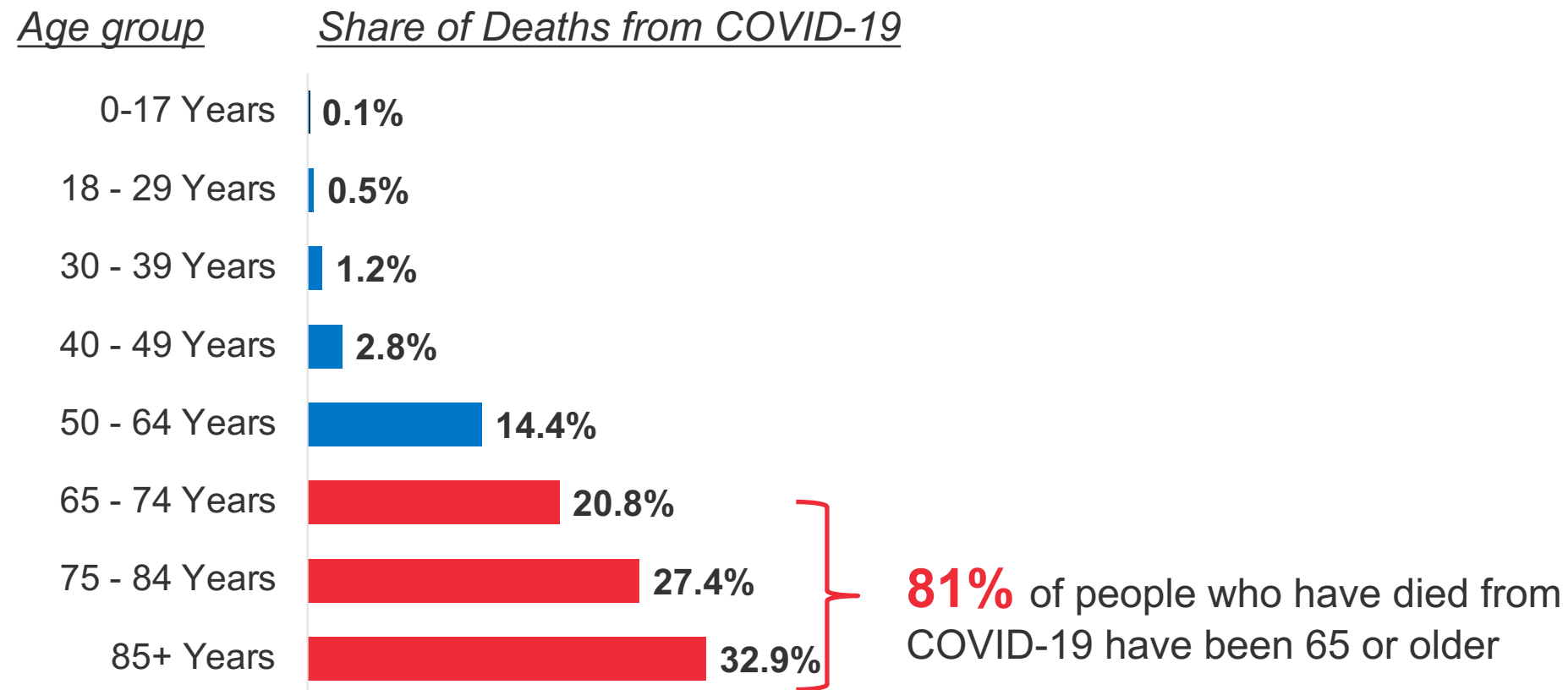
Senior Vice President and Senior Advisor to the President  
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Kaiser Family Foundation

January 15th, 2021



Filling the need for trusted information on national health issues.

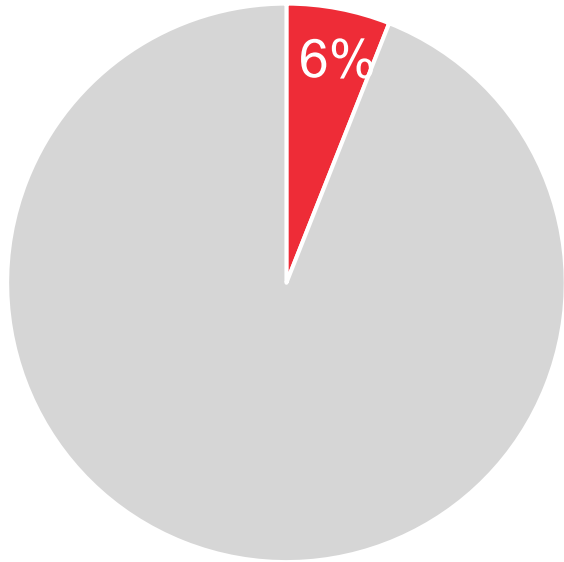
# Adults Age 65+ Account For **14%** Of All COVID-19 Cases But **81%** Of COVID-19 Deaths



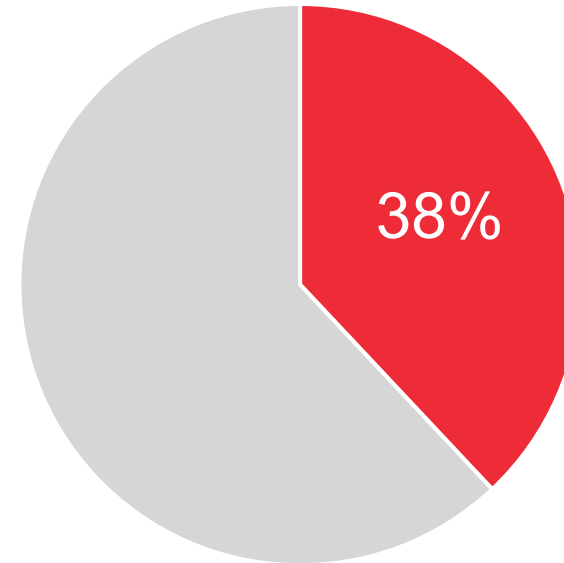
SOURCE: CDC COVID Data Tracker, available at: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>. Data as of January 8, 2021.

# Long-term Care Facilities Are Ground Zero For COVID-19 Deaths

*LTC facility residents and staff account for:*



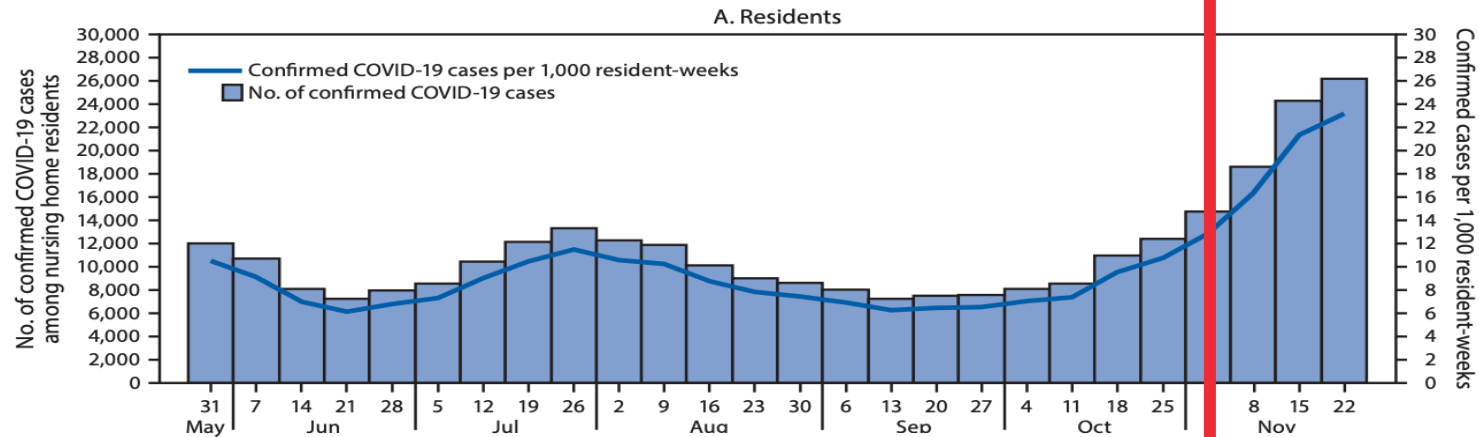
***Share of all COVID-19 Cases***



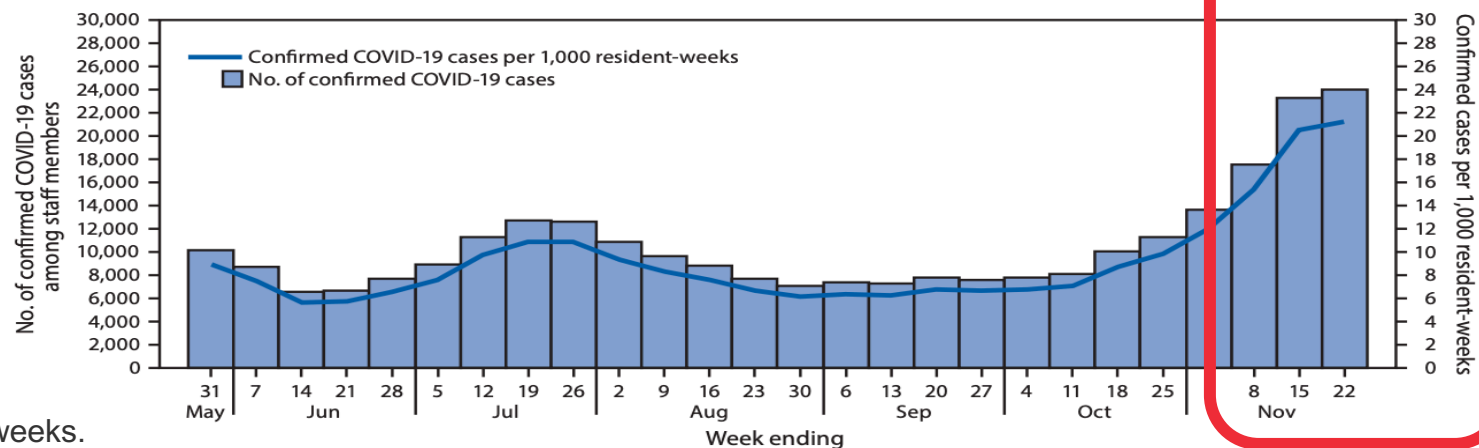
***Share of all COVID-19 Deaths***

# The Number Of Cases Among Residents And Staff In Nursing Homes Is Increasing and at the Highest Point of the Year

## Residents



## Staff Members

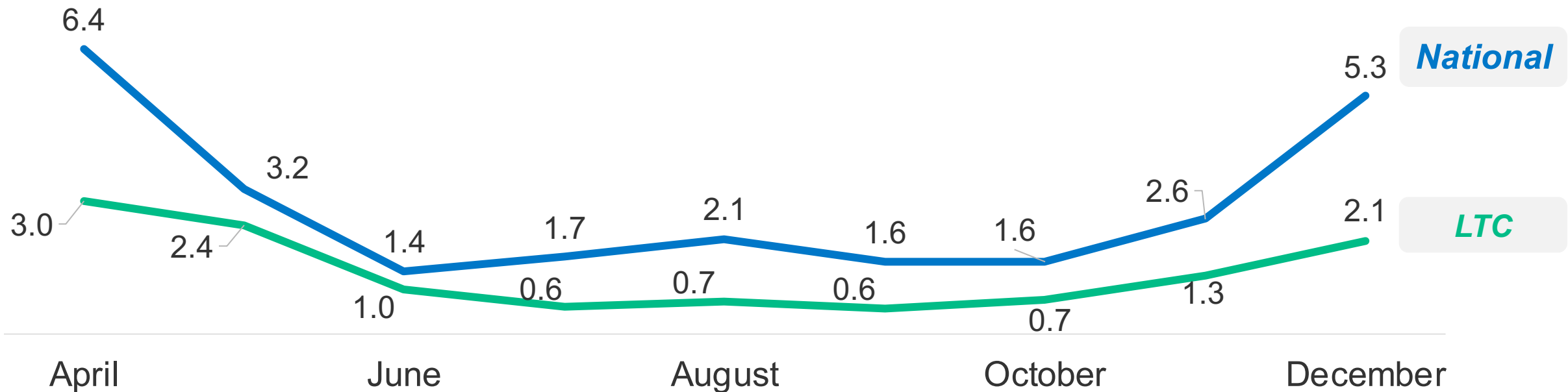


NOTES: Per 1,000 resident weeks.

SOURCE: Bagchi S, Mak J, Li Q, et al. Rates of COVID-19 Among Residents and Staff Members in Nursing Homes — United States, May 25–November 22, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 8 January 2021. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7002e2external> icon

# COVID-19 Deaths In Long-term Care Facilities Are On The Upswing, Similar To National Trends

*Average New **Deaths** Per Week Per 100,000 US Residents, By Month*



NOTES: Data for both LTC and National calculations include only data from states in which LTC data is available. Data is current as of the week of December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. See methods for more details on how these values were calculated. Population data is from 2019 US Census Bureau Estimates. US New Weekly Cases and Deaths data is based on analysis of COVID Tracking Project cases and deaths data.

# Who's at the front of the line for COVID-19 vaccines?

**On Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, HHS revised its recommendations to give priority to people ages 65 and older**

## **CDC Initial Priority Recommendations:**

***Phase 1a:*** Health care workers and long-term care facility residents

***Phase 1b:*** People ages 75+ and frontline essential workers

***Phase 1c:*** People ages 65–74, people 16–64 years with high-risk medical conditions, and any essential workers not included in Phase 1a or 1b.

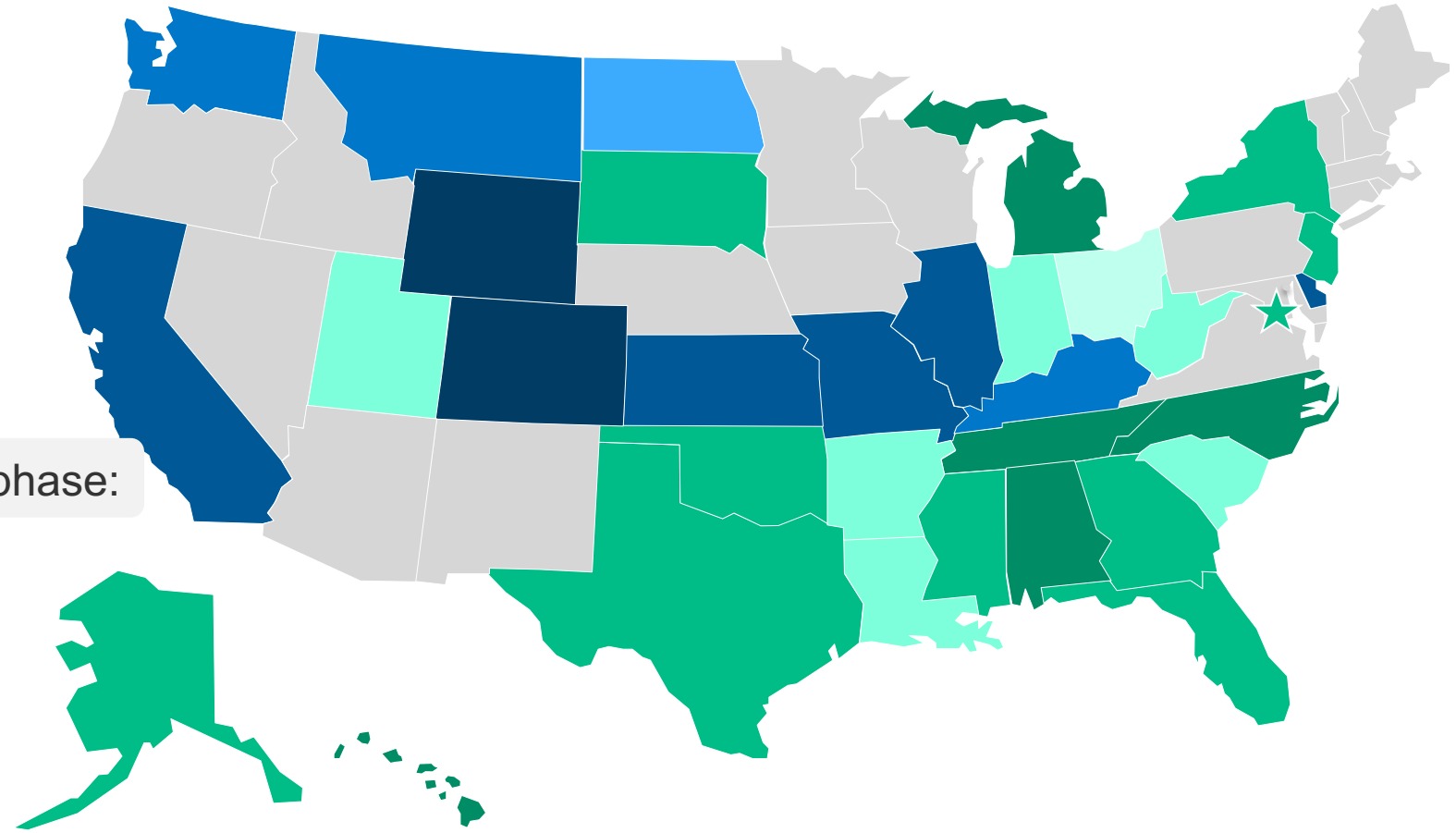
# Significant State Variation: Many States Are Currently Administering COVID-19 Vaccinations To Seniors, While Others Plan On It During Phase 1b.

State is currently administering to seniors:

- Administering to adults 65+
- Administering to adults 80+
- Administering to adults 70+
- Administering to adults 75+

State plans to administer to seniors in next phase:

- Will administer to adults age 70-74
- Will administer to adults age 65-74
- Will administer to adults age 70+
- Will administer to adults age 65+



NOTE: Some states allow counties to decide phase of distribution; for these states, the phase that the majority of counties are in is shown. Map only shows states that have expanded recommended age groups independent of underlying health conditions. Alabama, Arkansas, Ohio, South Dakota, and Utah have expanded eligibility on Monday, January 18, 2021. **Data as of January 13, 2021.**

SOURCE: KFF, "State COVID-19 Vaccine Priority Populations," available at: <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/state-covid-19-vaccine-priority-populations>



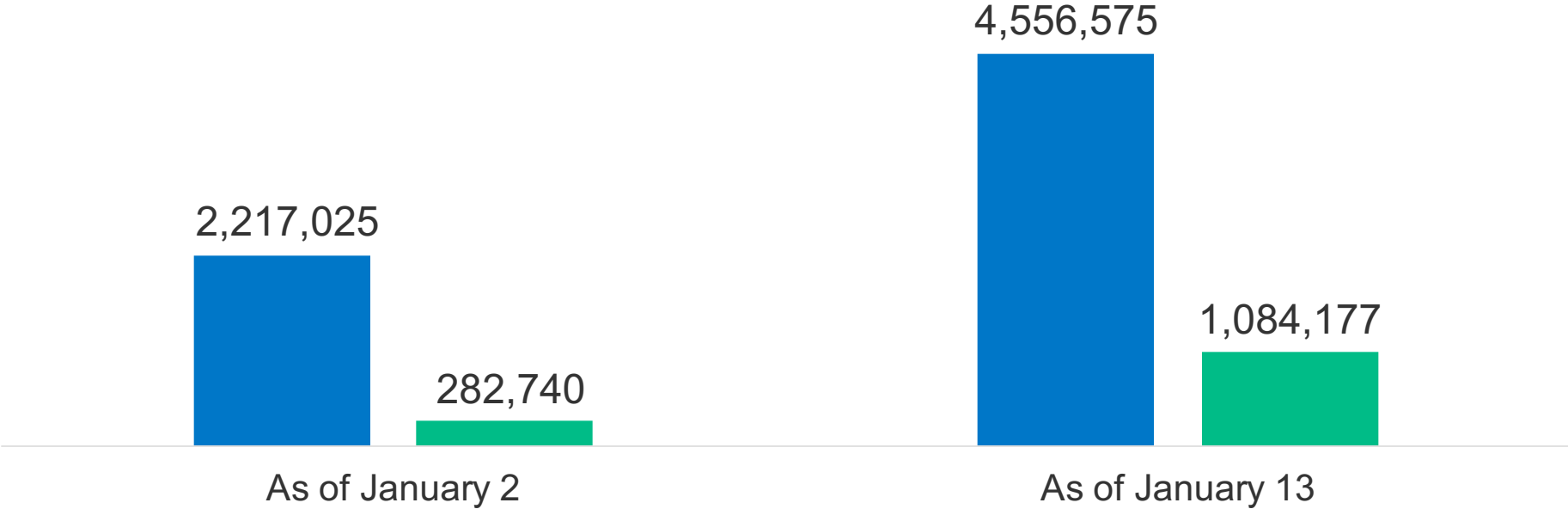
# The Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program

- HHS has partnered with CVS and Walgreens to provide and administer COVID-19 vaccines to residents and staff of long-term care facilities (LTCF) nationwide with no out-of-pocket costs
- The goal of the partnership is to minimize the burden on long-term care facilities and health departments for vaccine handling, administration, and fulfilling reporting requirements
- This program is available to:
  - Residents and staff members in all long-term care settings, including skilled nursing facilities (SNF), nursing homes, assisted living facilities, residential care homes, and adult family homes.
  - Available in most rural areas that may not have an easily accessible pharmacy.

**SOURCE:** CDC, “Understanding the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program,” available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/long-term-care/pharmacy-partnerships.html>.

# More than 1 Million People in Long-Term Care Facilities Have Received a COVID-19 Vaccine Dose, About a Quarter of All Doses Distributed

■ Number of Vaccinations Distributed to LTC Facilities   ■ Number of People in LTC who have Received First Dose

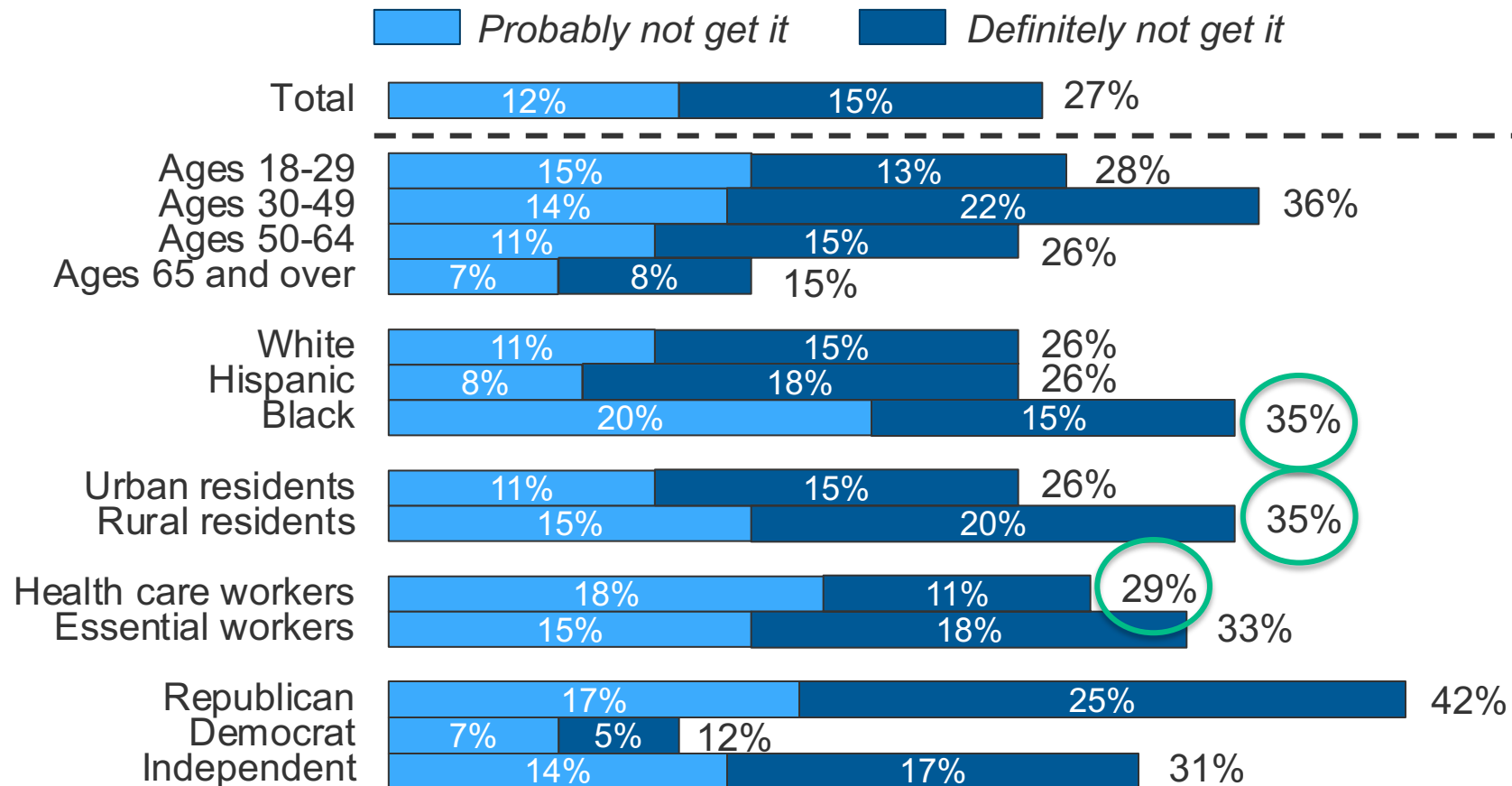


<i>Doses given as a share of total distributed</i>	<b>13%</b>	<b>24%</b>
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NOTE: Data as of January 13, 2021 at 9:00am EST.  
SOURCE: CDC COVID Data Tracker, available at: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>.

# Black Adults, Younger Adults, And Rural Residents Are Most Likely To Report Being Hesitant About The COVID-19 Vaccine

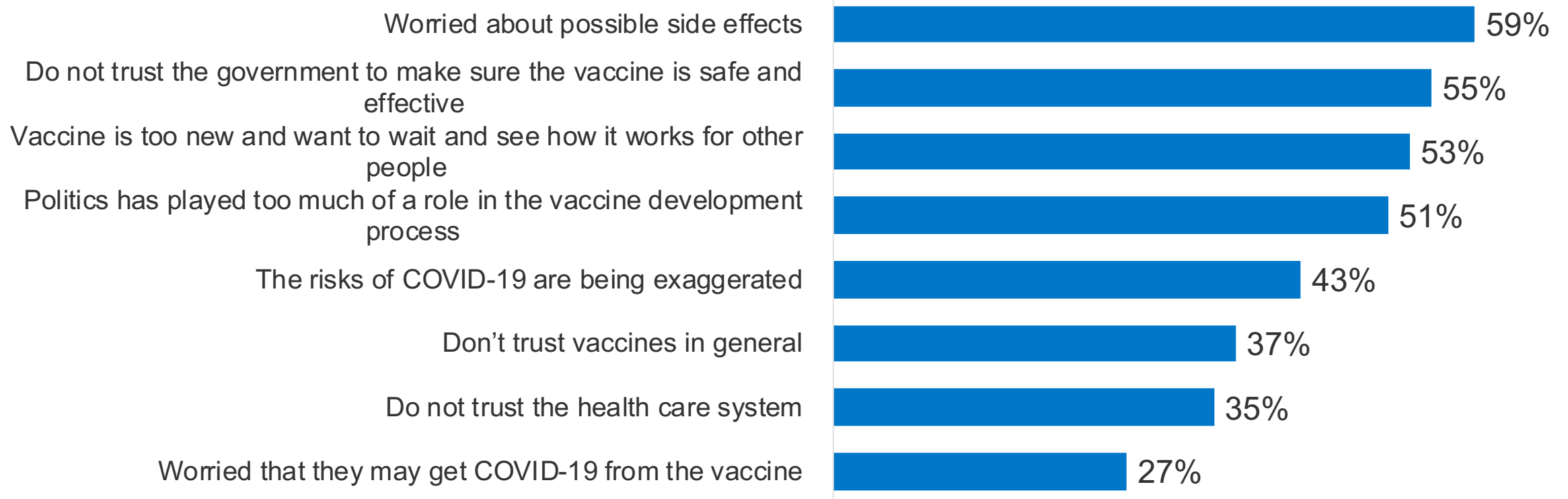
Percent within each group who say, if a COVID-19 vaccine was determined to be safe by scientists and available for free to everyone who wanted it, they would **probably not get it** or **definitely not get it**:



SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (KFF Health Tracking Poll, Nov. 30-Dec. 8, 2020). See topline for full question wording.

# Among Those Who Report That They Would Definitely Or Probably Not Get Vaccinated, Nearly Two-thirds Were Worried About Possible Side Effects

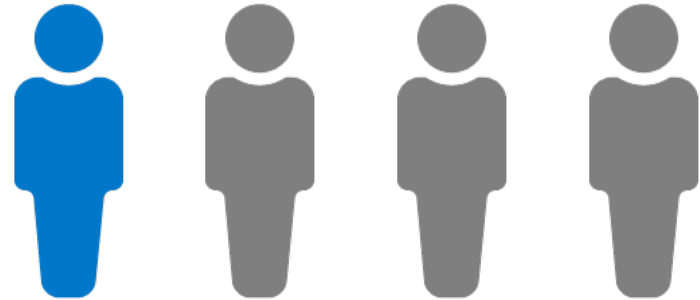
AMONG THOSE WHO WOULD DEFINITELY NOT OR PROBABLY NOT GET VACCINATED: Percent who say each of the following is a **major reason** why:



SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (KFF Health Tracking Poll, Nov. 30-Dec. 8, 2020). See topline for full question wording.

# 1 In 4 Older Adults Report Anxiety Or Depression During The Pandemic, Up From 1 In 10 In 2018

- Current public health guidelines recommend older adults limit in-person social interactions as much as possible.
- Nursing homes and LTC facilities have restricted visitations for residents.
- While this is effective in limiting exposure to disease, it contributes to social isolation and loneliness.



**One in four adults age 65 and older** (24%; 10.9 million) reported anxiety or depression amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as of August 2020.

# Some Good News With Ongoing Challenges

## Cause for Optimism

- Operation Warp Speed was warp speed!
- Vaccination numbers are rising, although not fast enough
- New Biden Administration plans to invest significant resources for vaccine distribution

## But

- Case counts are higher than at any time since the start of the pandemic
- Serious illness and deaths due to COVID-19 disproportionately affect older adults
- Vaccination rates are not where they should be
- Strategies are needed for harder-to-reach populations: this is a health equity issue
- Targeted education is needed to address deeply felt concerns about vaccine safety
- Compounding effects of COVID-19 on social isolation is taking a toll

# Medicare, Long-term Care, and COVID-19 on KFF.org



- ✓ COVID-19 Coronavirus Tracker – Updated as of January 12
- ✓ This Week in Coronavirus
- ✓ State COVID-19 Data and Policy Actions

For more information, visit [kff.org/medicare](https://kff.org/medicare)